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## **THE QUEEN AND MR. GLADSTONE**



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*The Rt. Hon W. E. Gladstone, M.P.*

*From a photograph in the possession of the National Portrait Gallery*

# THE QUEEN AND MR. GLADSTONE

PHILIP GUEDALLA

1880-1898  
*1880-1898*

LONDON  
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1933

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*THE present volume, which concludes the correspondence of Queen Victoria with Mr. Gladstone, contains 855 documents, of which 620 are hitherto unpublished. It covers the period between his return to office in 1880 and his death in 1898 ; and in a narrative study prefixed to the papers the Editor continues his attempt to portray the letter-writers and to set their correspondence against the background of events. A preliminary chapter bridges the gap between the volumes with a detailed examination of Disraeli's influence upon the Queen in the intervening years, which is the key to the sharp alteration in her attitude to Mr. Gladstone.*

*P. G.*



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## *COMMENTARY*

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are fully cited, are given thus : **13**

# I

## ESTRANGEMENT

FOR more than half a century the unresting figures of Queen Victoria and Mr. Gladstone toiled across the uneven surface of English public life. The road led both of them towards the summits, since both were guided by the same high sense of public duty ; and for a time, as the path wound slowly up towards the silent peaks, they seemed to follow it together. Not that they always walked in step ; for his ardour frequently outpaced her. But they had travelled the same road up the long slope of public business, eased by private friendship and mutual regard. The valley was beneath them now, and the fellow-travellers toiled up the long ascent together. But suddenly, almost without a warning, they parted company ; the mountain dropped away towards abysses of misunderstanding and distrust ; and their paths diverged. That sad divergence, by which their remaining years were clouded, must be studied if the watchers of a later age are to realise which of them was the first to turn away, from what causes, and in what direction, and how it happened that the two leading figures of a great generation ended their journey with their backs turned obstinately upon each other.

### I .

It is a simple matter to detect the first interruption of the Queen's friendly intercourse with Mr. Gladstone. They had been acquainted for thirty years before an unhappy argument about her time-table in 1871 caused them to drift apart. Earlier discussions of the same theme had left their friendship unimpaired. But the

Queen's health that summer was uncertain, and the effect on their relations was grave. Gladstone was quick to note the change in her, recording ruefully after his next visit to Balmoral that "the repellent power which she so well knows how to use has been put in action towards me on this occasion for the first time since the formation of the Government. I have felt myself on a new and different footing with her."

That was the watershed. The fellow-travellers had passed the crest, and now the mountain fell steeply away beneath them. The slope was gradual at first. For a tactful secretary reported the Queen "very much pleased" with Mr. Gladstone's visit; his sympathetic letters in the anxious days of the Prince of Wales's illness earned high favour; and the royal gratitude found unusual expression in the considerate offer of a house in his own constituency. But presently a protracted argument about the public duties of the Prince of Wales further abridged their intimacy; and when they met, the royal manner "was as usual kind & pleasing. Nevertheless the whole helped to show me yet more that the occurrences & correspondence of this year have led & will lead her to 'shut up' (so to speak) towards me." They could still exchange condolences and comments on the new books and friendly courtesies on family occasions. The Prime Minister still found his sovereign "extremely well & very gracious." But he was careful now to avoid those personal and dynastic questions, upon which he held such strong and uncongenial views. He no longer felt at liberty to press the Queen for more public appearances or to urge the growing claims of the Prince of Wales. The normal stream of official business might still flow smoothly between Downing Street and Windsor; but full confidence was at an end. For a slight chill had fallen between them.

Their relations had reached this mildly uncomfortable stage, when Mr. Gladstone went out of office in 1874.

Perhaps there was just a touch of hurry, which he found  
1 "of scant kindness," in her eagerness to accept his  
resignation. But when they met, she tactfully repressed  
an inclination to inform him that the Government's  
2 defeat "was greatly owing to his own unpopularity, and  
to the want of confidence people had in him" (although  
she thought so). Indeed, her kind duplicity was so  
3 successful that a colleague found him "quite 'under the  
charm'" on his return from Windsor; and at his final  
audience, when the Queen gave him good advice about  
4 his health, she seemed "very kind." There was no  
indication yet of any shrinking from him; and he still  
510-2 sent her copies of his books and photographs of pictures  
she might care to buy with all the confidence of one who  
felt himself to be a welcome correspondent.

Was he? For a few months, perhaps. But other in-  
fluences were soon at work; and 1874 was not far gone  
before the Queen, a ready pupil, learned to view Disraeli  
as the pattern of a Prime Minister and to turn almost with  
relief from her contrasting memories of his predecessor.  
Her brief experience of Disraeli during his first Premier-  
ship in 1868 left little more than an excited recollection  
5 of his letters—such letters "in his best novel style," as  
someone said, "telling her every scrap of political news  
dressed up to serve his own purpose, and every scrap of  
social gossip cooked to amuse her"—and of a slightly  
6 fulsome gentleman who thanked her "at your Majesty's  
feet" for his wife's peerage and alluded with emotion to  
his own unworthy efforts in the service of "a Sovereign  
whom it is really a delight to serve." It had not seemed  
to make much impression at the time. But the effect  
was heightened by the intervening years of sedate  
correspondence with Mr. Gladstone. For Mr. Gladstone  
never wrote like that. His humble duty was presented  
with becoming reiteration; but he was never at her feet.  
He never wrote to say, even if he thought so, that it was  
a delight to serve her. His grave epistolary manner left

little room for compliments ; and public business received far more of his attention than private feelings. Indeed, his slightly exacting sense of public duty—her duty—occasionally came in conflict with her feelings. He had his lighter moods, in which he sent her articles to read and little books about the Passion Play at Oberammergau and recommended water-colours by deserving artists. But his House of Commons letters were a sober chronicle, his Cabinet reports an unexciting record of business done. There was no fault to find with them ; those miracles of understatement were impeccable, a formality quite faultlessly performed. Their imperfections, if they had any, resided rather in what they did not say than in anything that Mr. Gladstone wrote. For he never regaled her with the London gossip : it may be doubted if he knew it. There was no picture of excited gentlemen contending in a crowded House for rival policies, of her devoted servants on the Treasury Bench engaged in their nightly act of saving England, no breathless narrative of swaying Cabinets in severed council with ministers in sharp dissent conforming by a last-minute decision to her royal will. While Mr. Gladstone was Prime Minister, it was not easy for the Queen to dramatise the rôle of constitutional monarch.

So it was quite a pleasant thrill when Mr. Disraeli came to Windsor, dropped on one knee, and kissed her hand with an exciting murmur of, " I plight my troth to the kindest of *mistresses*." This seemed to promise something warmer than the slightly chilling stream of Mr. Gladstone's never-failing courtesy ; and when her new Prime Minister wrote of " that thorough knowledge of what was going on, and due control over the public business, which he always wishes your Majesty to possess and exercise," the royal prospect was still brighter. Here was a lively contrast with Mr. Gladstone, and when occasion offered, Disraeli did not fail to point it. For soon the debates on the Public Worship Regulation Bill brought the ex-Premier

from Hawarden ; and when he spoke, Disraeli's letter to the Queen informed her that " in a rhetorical point of view he surpassed himself ; as a statesman, he threw off the mask, and the only logical conclusion of his address was the disestablishment of that Church of which Your Majesty is the head. The effect of his speech on the House was to alarm it . . ." and the skilled reporter passed on the feeling to the Queen, a gallant Premier standing between her threatened Church and the vague menace of Mr. Gladstone. This was a novel use to make of the Prime Minister's reports on Parliament. In former years Gladstone had recorded scores of Opposition speeches by Disraeli ; his language was severely neutral, and sometimes he cheerfully admitted that " Mr. Disraeli was particularly happy and effective in the tone of banter which he frequently employs." But though he viewed his rival with profound distrust, Gladstone had made no attempt to infect the Queen with his suspicions. Even his poor opinion of Disraelian tactics in a recent crisis, which had exploded in the private comment (almost unprecedented for Mr. Gladstone) that the Leader of the Opposition was an " artful dodger," found no echo in Gladstone's official letters to the Queen. But his successor felt less restraint. It undeniably made better reading ; and as it was his duty to let his sovereign know everything, he would let her know precisely what he thought of Mr. Gladstone.

The Queen, who seemed receptive, replied that " Mr. Gladstone's conduct is much to be regretted though it is not surprising." So Disraeli, in the congenial *rôle* of a sound Churchman, played lightly on the Queen's apprehensions, and two heads were sadly shaken over Mr. Gladstone's goings on. The spell began to work ; a faint tinge of alarm began to creep into her view of the late Prime Minister ; and within a year Disraeli was recording gleefully that royal concern about his own health was dictated " not so much from love of me as



dread of somebody else." So it was almost a relief when Mr. Gladstone wrote from Hawarden informing her of his resignation of the Liberal leadership. His humble duty was submitted quite touchingly, "perhaps for the last time." But the Queen was notably untouched; a further instalment of Mr. Gladstone's duty was the last thing that she desired; and her letter of farewell was almost perfunctory. 617

A further innovation threatened the hold of any Opposition speaker on royal favour. For a free use of courtly terminology increased the Queen's belief that acts of her Government were acts done personally by herself. Other ministers had governed England in her name; but Mr. Disraeli and his obliging colleagues seemed less presumptuous, since they appeared to govern according to her wishes. Had he not assured her on the Public Worship Bill that "the only object of Lord Cairns and Mr. Disraeli had been to further Your Majesty's wishes in this matter, which will always be with them a paramount object"? If that were so, the Bill itself was an expression of her royal will; and it was highly indiscreet, if not actually treasonable, for members to challenge it. A legal fiction is a heady diet; and as this belief grew on her, richly encouraged by Disraeli's flowers of speech, Opposition speakers steadily declined in royal favour with each Parliamentary onslaught delivered on the Queen's ministers. For she was gradually learning to identify herself with their decisions; and if they happened to be Conservatives, so much the worse for Liberals. 619

Romance and policy alike endeared the illusion to Disraeli. It made him feel like Strafford to inform the House of Commons that he stood there "by the favour of the Queen," like Bolingbroke in full cry after his *Patriot King* to descant upon the blessings of "a real Throne." His antiquarian sense was richly satisfied by pre-Revolution gestures of obeisance. It was delightful to behave as though the Whigs had never worked their sordid will 17

upon the Constitution, as though a Venetian oligarchy of land-owners had never usurped the government of England and he was carried in his chair through Whitehall to kneel, a loyal servant of the Crown, before his royal mistress. The realities of official life in 1875 might fall a trifle short ; there was a dearth of ruffles ; he rarely wore a sword ; and the House of Commons seemed to play a rather larger part than was convenient in a historical romance. But facts were rarely strong enough to mar Disraelian romance. If he was capable of love-letters addressed to sexagenarian countesses that Romeo might have found slightly embarrassing, what difficulty was there in transforming Queen Victoria into a cross between Titania and Catherine the Great ? It satisfied his taste for romance to woo his sovereign with circumstantial tenderness ; it was highly entertaining to pretend that his head might leap from its shoulders at her casual command ; besides, it was extremely gratifying in cold reality to live on terms of intimacy with a Queen ; and public business was undeniably facilitated by the maintenance of easy relations with the Crown. There was everything to recommend it ; and Disraeli entered with unequalled gusto on his game of royal make-believe. Derby, a cautious colleague, was already writing to enquire, " Is there not just a risk of encouraging her in too large ideas of her personal power, and too great indifference to what the public expects ? I only ask ; it is for you to judge." A shrewd Prime Minister judged that the Queen was a valuable addition to the pieces on the board. He knew, he felt quite certain that he knew just how to move her ; and if other players were likely to be less successful, was he to complain ?

This mood controlled his dealings with the Crown. A happy cry informed a correspondent that he felt " fortunate in having a female Sovereign. I owe everything to woman ; and if in the sunset of life I have still a young heart, it is due to that influence." Disraeli excelled

in captivating dowagers ; and now his cap was set at the greatest dowager of them all. His success, if his own evidence could be believed, was quite astonishing. The royal features melted into smiles at his approach ; she beamed ; she glided up and down the room ; and he was positively invited to take a chair, although the cautious wooer put it back against the wall before he left in order to preserve their secret. The charmer found his Queen an easy conquest ; and it was not the least of his resources to remind her constantly that she was a Queen. Her own dramatic instincts, starved by her long retirement and the unexciting *rôle* of constitutional monarch, were richly satisfied by the new tone. It was a thrill to feel herself the embodiment of England, to be informed when the Treasury bought shares in the Suez Canal that " It is just settled : you have it, Madam." The dull charade of public business acquired fresh meaning for her, as she learned from her delightful teacher to identify each act of state with her own self. It had its drawbacks (as the cautious Derby had foreseen), when the new appetite impelled her to force on the Royal Titles Bill at an extremely awkward moment. Her own activities in this connection were engagingly confessed to Disraeli in a generous admission of " how much *she* had urged this herself." But the Prime Minister, having raised the wind, managed to ride it in tolerable comfort and earned the Queen's undying gratitude for her " kind, good and considerate friend " on the Treasury Bench.

But this transformation of her *rôle* had graver consequences for the Opposition. Early in 1875 Gladstone emerged from his retirement to speak upon an Army Bill, which looked suspiciously like an attempt to re-introduce Purchase by subterfuge. Disraeli, in his best mock heroics, reported to the Queen that " the greater event was—the return from Elba : Mr. Gladstone not only appeared, but rushed into the debate. The House, very full, was breathless. The new members trembled and fluttered like small

birds when a hawk is in the air. . . ." But the Queen commented sternly on "the extraordinary and to her incomprehensible course of the Opposition." For she was learning to regard all critics of her present ministers as wrong-headed men. This awkward mood deepened upon her as the current issues shifted to foreign politics and the Turkish Empire was outlined in a red glare of insurrection. In those eventful weeks, as Disraeli tasted the first joys of international complications, Gladstone laid aside his notes on "Future Retribution"; a more rousing theme was drumming in his ears; and England heard the first thunders of his invective against the Turks—"their Zaptiehs and their Mudirs, their Bimbashis and their Yuzbachis, their Kaimakams and their Pashas"—and any ministers who would perpetuate that tyranny in Europe. This was unfortunate in view of the Queen's new-found belief that foreign policy was an improper theme for controversy; and she was moved to frank indignation by "the short-sightedness and unpatriotic conduct of those who would make a *party question* of such a momentous crisis as the present, instead of rallying round the Government to assist it in the *anxious* and delicate task of procuring peace without losing sight of the true interests of the great Empire." It was not altogether clear how public men who disagreed with ministers could rally round them to much purpose; but the Queen could scarcely admit that disagreement was allowable. More than ever it seemed to her that criticism of her Government was a disloyal act; and Mr. Gladstone in 1876, breaking in thunder on the heads of ministers and gaily oblivious of his own retirement, was nothing if not a critic. When he entertained St. James's Hall with a sustained tirade, Disraeli found her "most indignant . . . she thinks the Attorney-General ought to be set at these men; it can't be constitutional." The miscreants included Ruskin, Froude, Carlyle, Burne-Jones, the Duke of Argyll, and Canon Liddon; and Disraeli, with discrim-

ating chivalry, made excuses for Granville and Hartington and the less vocal elements of the Opposition, "to whom, I was sure, she might look, if necessary, with confidence." But by consent Gladstone was left under the silent ban of royal disapproval.

Indeed, it was not always silent. The Queen (as she wrote to a daughter) could only think that he had "taken leave of his reason!" Times were too serious for party politics. When Lord Beaconsfield had uttered a grave threat of war, it was disgraceful to provide the world with the spectacle of a divided nation—"Mr. G. has unfortunately *not* only injured himself in trying to injure the Government; he has done irreparable mischief in encouraging Russia and people *abroad* to think that we shall *never* fight or resist their encroachments and arrogance." And if that were not bad enough, he had said the most unpleasant things about British policy - her policy :

"It is not patriotic and has nothing to do with Conservative or Liberal, or the general jealousy and dislike of Lord Beaconsfield, which is in itself very wrong when great national interests are at stake, and they might as well accuse me of untruthfulness as Lord Beaconsfield in his plain and perfectly faithful statement of the anxious and difficult negotiations, of which I am completely cognisant. . . . To me it is, I must say, utterly inexplicable and totally at variance with usage, for statesmen who have been in high office and who have *known* all the difficulties and anxieties of Government to behave as they have done."

To this point had the Disraelian transformation of his Queen proceeded. For the charm had worked; and now she saw his critics with his eyes.

Those eyes were, to say the least, disinclined to make allowances for Mr. Gladstone. For Lord Beaconsfield regaled his humbler correspondents with elegant abuse of "the Greenwich Tartuffe" and "that unprincipled maniac

Gladstone—extraordinary mixture of envy, vindictiveness, hypocrisy, and superstition ; and with one commanding characteristic—whether Prime Minister, or Leader of Opposition, whether preaching, praying, speechifying, or scribbling—never a gentleman ” ; and his royal pupil progressed so far that an observer at Balmoral could report that “ her denunciation of her late Ministers last night was couched in plain English, worthy of her Grandfather. I was really startled at its vehemence and suggested that Mr. Gladstone had really never mastered nor understood Foreign Policy.” That was extremely handsome of the Postmaster-General ; and, these ministerial promptings aiding, she reached a further stage. For soon Lord Beaconsfield informed an intimate that “ she seems now really to hate Gladstone ” and—better still—“ she really thinks G. mad.” Such were the consequences of venturing to disagree with ministers upon the Eastern Question in 1876.

## 2

It marked a stage in the deterioration of the Queen’s view of Mr. Gladstone. The slight chill of 1872, the awkwardness of 1874, became positive dislike and disapproval in 1876. Their paths could never meet again, and the angle of divergence grew sharper as the years went by. She recognised it later as the decisive moment, and her catalogue of his misdeeds invariably opened with 1876.—“ Mr. Gladstone *she* could have nothing to do with, for she considers his whole conduct since ’76 to have been one series of violent, passionate invective against and abuse of Lord Beaconsfield, and that *he* caused the Russian war, and made the task of the Government of this country most difficult in times of the greatest difficulty and anxiety, and did all to try and prevent England from holding the position which, thanks to Lord Beaconsfield’s firmness, has been restored to her.” Those were the charges ; familiar on Conservative platforms, they acquired unusual distinction from the

royal pen. But now her transformation was complete, and under the magician's wand the Queen emerged in the impressive and familiar outline of her later manner.

Nothing, perhaps, was more indicative of the change in her than her altered attitude to statesmanship. In former years she had found few things more distasteful than Lord Palmerston's ineradicable tendency to be dashing in his foreign policy ; all her counsellors—the Prince Consort, Lord Aberdeen, Sir Robert Peel—had uniformly disapproved ; and she had dutifully shared their feelings. Indeed, the milder note of Mr. Gladstone found favour very largely by reason of its contrast with the metallic tones in which Lord Palmerston habitually addressed the Continent. But her new favourite was frankly Palmerstonian. Had he not gleefully informed a friend that “ since Pam we have never been so energetic, and in a year's time we shall be more ” ? His admiration of the old *sabreur* of diplomacy had always been ungrudging ; and the half-written novel in his desk at Ilughenden was full of compliments to that engaging figure who “ seemed never better than when the gale ran high.” His everlasting youth, his indomitable gallantry, his endless composition of state papers were all enviously portrayed in *Endymion* ; and the admiring novelist exclaimed with genuine emotion, “ Look to Lord Roehampton ; he is the man. He does not care a rush whether the revenue increases or declines. He is thinking of real politics ; foreign affairs ; maintaining our power in Europe.” It is hardly singular that Disraeli's diplomacy was full of Palmerstonian echoes ; but it was more surprising that the Queen admired it, since she had so conspicuously failed to like the original. But then Lord Palmerston had never taken the slightest pains to identify her with his own proceedings. He never made the least pretence that his working days were spent in imposing her royal will on a reluctant Cabinet or heralded an annexation with a happy cry of “ You have it,

Madam." It is improbable that he ever thought of it or that, if he had, he would have dreamt of doing so. But his disciple was more sagacious. Disraeli's mildly Palmerstonian policy was made acceptable at Court by a most un-Palmerstonian technique; and in reward a devoted sovereign espoused his cause, smiled upon his friends, and watched his enemies with angry disapproval.

Quite unsuspecting, Mr. Gladstone persevered in Opposition. It was a little ominous, perhaps, that at the Levee in 1877, "the Queen smiled but had not a word." There was no public indication, though, that she had flung her shield invisibly (like a Homeric goddess) over Lord Beaconsfield and that each spear which Mr. Gladstone hurled against it jarred the Queen's sheltering arm. He had no means of knowing how abysmally he had declined in royal favour. But there were evidences of a new tone about the Court that seemed unpromising. Early in 1878 he met a former colleague of Lord Beaconsfield's, recently resigned from the Cabinet :—

"Yesterday I saw Carnarvon, whose conversation was remarkable. . . . But what I wish particularly to record are two statements given in the strictest confidence, which show how little at present within the royal precinct liberty is safe.

"1. It has happened repeatedly not only that Cabinet Ministers have been sent for to receive 'wiggings' from the Queen—which as he said it is their affair & fault if they allow to impair their independence—but communications have from time to time been made to the Cabinet warning it off from certain subjects and saying she could not agree to this & could not agree to that. . . .

"I said it recalled James II and the Bill of Rights to which he assented. It is at any rate a position much more advanced than that of George III who I apprehend limited himself to a case of conscience like the



Coronation Oath. But that controversy was decided once for all when Geo. IV after a terrible struggle agreed to the Roman Catholic Emancipation Bill.

"I said that such an outrage as this was wholly new, totally unknown in any Cabinet in which I had served ; and that the corruption must be regarded as due to Lord Beaconsfield, which he entirely felt . . ."

Here was an awkward prospect for the next Cabinet ; and Mr. Gladstone grimly foresaw constitutional trouble. But as yet he knew little of a more personal aspect of the Queen's altered mood. How could he tell that his own name was now a synonym of error in the royal correspondence ? He could not know that when Lord Beaconsfield wished to describe an unsatisfactory speech by a misguided colleague, he termed it to his mistress one "which might have proceeded from Mr. Gladstone," or that within a month of her silent smile at the Levee the Queen herself was writing his own "wildness, folly and fury !" When the diplomat returned from Berlin, proudly bearing "Peace with Honour," Cyprus, and the Garter, she shared Disraeli's triumph and wrote in glee that "high and low are delighted excepting Mr. Gladstone, who is frantic." And as the sands of that triumphant ministry ran out, the Queen was writing to a Court lady that "I never could take Mr. Gladstone or Mr. Lowe as my Minister again, for I never COULD have the slightest *particle* of confidence in Mr. Gladstone *after* his violent, mischievous, and dangerous conduct for the last three years." Once more the tale of his iniquities was dated from 1876, from the opening of his presumptuous attack on Lord Beaconsfield's, on England's, on the Queen's foreign policy.

In those winter days of 1879 Mr. Gladstone travelled North to aggravate his offence. The train took him to Midlothian ; and for a week the thunders of his eloquence rolled round the village halls. Lord Beaconsfield wrote airy little notes to ladies about "narratory of the In

petuous Hypocrite." All this "rhodomontade and rigmarole" failed to amuse him. But when the Queen wrote anxiously to urge a combination with "some of the sensible, and reasonable and not violent men on the other side" against a new and most disturbing appetite for Home Rule among the Irish members, he reported moodily that "there are no 'sensible and reasonable, and really not violent men' in the ranks of the Opposition on whom your Majesty might now act. The nominal leaders have no authority; and the mass, chiefly under the guidance and authority, or rather inspiration, of Mr. Gladstone, who avoids the responsibility of his position, are animated by an avidity for office such as Lord Beaconsfield, after more than forty years' experience, cannot recall." Such appetites are frequent in Oppositions on the eve of General Elections; and the stern sowing of Midlothian was bearing fruit.

Few contrasts, perhaps, are livelier than that between the effects of Mr. Gladstone's speeches and their austere reality. For the Queen was soon writing about his "violent, passionate invective against and abuse of Lord Beaconsfield." But, by modern standards of abuse, there is nothing half so exciting in those grave indictments of the Government. It might be a new departure, when the train stopped at Hawick, for an ex-Premier to step out and inform the waiting crowd that their cause was "the cause of peace, which is the cause of justice, which is the cause of liberty, which is the cause of honour, and which, in the hands of the people of this country, by the blessing of God, will not fail." But these incitements were hardly dangerous to public order. A grave catalogue of ministerial blunders from the time of the Andrassy Note to the Treaty of Berlin, a chilly glance at the latest complications in Afghanistan, detailed analysis of some departure from the strict principles of public finance (with a passing reference to the purer practice of Sir Robert Peel), a solemn warning against fresh commitments in every corner of the

earth, and a good deal of close reasoning upon the rousing theme of Scottish land tenure—such was the heady diet upon which Mr. Gladstone sustained his hearers. Rendered more palatable by the deep utterance and by the knowledge that an ex-minister of seventy was there to plead the case in person, it was enlivened by occasional excursions into burning irony—"We have undertaken to settle the affairs of about a fourth of the entire human race scattered over all the world. Is not that enough for the ambition of Lord Beaconsfield? It satisfied the Duke of Wellington and Mr. Canning, Lord Grey and Sir Robert Peel; it satisfied Lord Palmerston and Lord Russell, ay, and the late Lord Derby. And why cannot it satisfy . . ." The scorn was evident; but its expression kept within the strictest limits of decorous argument. He might permit himself a fling at "false phantoms of glory," or a grim demonstration that Cyprus, so far from safeguarding the road to India, lay three hundred miles away from it; the march of Empire on the north-west frontier of India moved him to an indignant picture of "the women and the children . . . driven forth to perish in the snows of winter"; and he was not always tender with triumphs over Zulus "slain for no other offence than their attempt to defend with their naked bodies their hearths and homes, their wives and families." The point of view, perhaps, might seem a shade eccentric in 1879; for Mr. Gladstone often suffered from a tendency to run ahead of his age. But it was not easy to detect the smallest deviation from patriotism or propriety.

Even in the mounting heat of the General Election his references to Lord Beaconsfield were marked by an extreme decorum. The Prime Minister invariably appeared as "the very eminent and distinguished man who is the heart and soul and life and centre of the Government"—that "Administration of which he is the very distinguished head." Only, indeed, in a panegyric on Sir Robert

Peel did the indignant orator permit himself a scornful glance at "his superiority to all the tricks that have been in vogue." His sole allusion to the Queen was of unimpeachable loyalty—a solemn enunciation of "what has been the attachment of Her Majesty to Scotland, and what has been the attachment of Scotland to Her Majesty, how fondly her name has been and is revered and loved under every roof-tree of the land." Perhaps his strictures on a recent tendency to overstrain the royal prerogative were unpalatable; the treaty-making power of the Crown, he argued, should not be exercised in the absence of full public knowledge and approval of the treaty, and the secret conclusion of the Anglo-Turkish Convention was a glaring violation of this usage. His language was precise—"They have abridged the just rights of Parliament, and have presented prerogative to the nation under an unconstitutional aspect, which tends to make it insecure. To save that prerogative will, in my opinion, be the work of prudence, caution, of studious reverence for ancient usage, careful respect for the rights of the people. But no repetitions of those strange pranks will, as I believe, be endured by the British nation; they will not consent to have their hands bound by the arbitrary act of a Minister. . . ." The warning was judicious; couched in a tone of grave reproof and deep respect for constitutional practice, it was about as revolutionary as Burke. But he was merciless to the new absolutism, although his constitutional theory did not go beyond the teaching of every lecture-room in Victorian England:—

"You may remember, perhaps, a speech of Lord Beaconsfield's in which he stated—perhaps not reflecting how much of his inner mind he was revealing by the phrase, when he said that 'the world was governed by sovereigns and statesmen.' Well, to that statement I demur. I think there are some other people that have to do with the matter, for I will add to states-

men Parliaments, and I will add to Parliaments nations. You are congratulated from time to time on the privilege of being a self-governed country. Let us take care that we recognise the fact. . . . There is no power, external to the House of Commons, that can endanger your freedom or tamper with your rights. The House of Lords has not the strength. The Sovereign if the Sovereign were so minded—and there have been in other days Sovereigns who were so minded--the Sovereign has not the power. There is no power in this country that can put your rights in prejudice except the House of Commons itself."

This sober reasoning could hardly please the Queen, if she had succumbed to the new teaching as completely as Carnarvon seemed to indicate. But Gladstone had no reason to suppose that she would take such matters personally; as Granville put it later on, "in attacking the Government, it never entered into Mr. Gladstone's head that he was opposing Your Majesty, however much what he said may have been disapproved by Your Majesty." At the Levee just before the General Election he noted that the sovereign "with her usual high manners put on a kindly smile." He was well aware, of course, of her attachment to the Government; when its defeat was evident, he attributed her brief delay "to the Queen's hesitation or reluctance." But there was not the slightest warning that she "never COULD have the slightest *particle* of confidence in Mr. Gladstone." That was the hidden gulf between them.

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The situation in 1880 was anything but simple. One fact was past dispute: Lord Beaconsfield had been defeated. An anguished outcry from the Queen expressed the grief to her of having to part with the kindest and most devoted as well as one of the wisest Ministers the

Queen has ever had." But beyond that unpleasant fact the further prospect was obscure. It could not be denied that the Liberals had been too many for Lord Beaconsfield ; but when it came to be decided who was to be her next Prime Minister, there seemed to be too many Liberals for the Queen as well.

The party had two official leaders—Lord Granville, in the House of Lords and Lord Hartington in the House of Commons—to say nothing of the claims (slightly unofficial in view of his retirement from the leadership in 1875) of Mr. Gladstone. Lord Beaconsfield was half inclined to think that his successor would be the blameless Granville ; in that case Gladstone (it was to be hoped) would decline to serve under him, preferring to hang menacingly on the flank of ministers, who could rely upon Conservative support against this danger. The Queen's reasoning was similar—" My great hope and belief is, that this shamefully heterogeneous union—out of mere folly—will separate into many parts very soon, and that the Conservatives will come in stronger than ever in a short time. Possibly a coalition first . . ." But before this agreeable prospect of Liberal disunion and Tory triumph could materialise, she must find a Liberal Prime Minister. Her own inclination was to send for Hartington, and the Prince of Wales agreed. One thing, at least, was clear : she would have nothing to do with Mr. Gladstone. General Ponsonby was told to make that perfectly plain to Granville and Hartington ; and she informed Lord Beaconsfield that " of course I shall not take any notice of . . . Mr. Gladstone, who has done so much mischief."

This was extremely awkward, as the country (it so happened) regarded the General Election as a victory for Mr. Gladstone. He had been Prime Minister before ; and to humbler persons there seemed to be no reason why he should not be Prime Minister again. The incessant thunder of his criticism since 1876 had done more than any other single factor to bring down the Government ; and

that circumstance, which marked him in the Queen's eyes as a political outlaw, indicated Mr. Gladstone to most people as the next Prime Minister. To be sure, he had emphasised his own position as a member of the rank and file by the expression of a public hope that "the verdict of the country would give to Lord Granville and Lord Hartington the responsible charge of its affairs." But that might be a mere *façon de parler*. For it was two years since his son had asked if he thought he would have to go back to office, and the deep voice had answered : "It does not depend on me but on the people." The people's view was tolerably clear, with crowds at railway stations cheering the member for Midlothian all the way home to Wales and letters pouring into Hawarden at the rate of hundreds a day. Even the German Crown Princess, dutifully offering a daughter's consolations to the Queen, could see it—"What is to be done with Mr. Gladstone if he is not to be in the new Ministry ; won't he be a terrible thorn in their side out of office ? I am afraid, from what I can hear and from what I read in different papers, that Mr. Gladstone is more popular among the Liberals and Radicals than ever, in fact, they are mad about him. It is not pleasant to think, but so it is." He was dazed but happy in the dreamlike "downfall of Beaconsfieldism . . . like the vanishing of some vast magnificent castle in an Italian romance" ; and his diary confessed that he was "stunned, but God will provide." Fortified by a short spell of reading (which included some Egyptology, *Guy Mannering*, and "that most heavenly man, George Herbert") and a bout of tree-felling at Hawarden, his own reflections satisfied him that, if the leaders of his party asked him to return, he could not possibly refuse their invitation. But in what capacity ? That was a simpler matter. An ex-Premier of seventy with forty years of public life behind him could not, he felt, consent to sit beneath his juniors. So Mr. Gladstone's mind was quite made up : he would be the next Prime Minister.

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But the decision did not lie with him. The Queen had still to act ; and Lord Beaconsfield advised her formally  
61 to send for Hartington, adding the slightly unusual commendation of a Liberal leader that " he was in his heart a Conservative." There was the usual exchange of views on the subject of Mr. Gladstone, " who had done everything he could to vilify and weaken the Government in times of the greatest difficulty " and could hardly " be my Minister under such circumstances " ; and Hartington was duly summoned. That paladin was not encouraging. Lord Beaconsfield had told her that he would be straightforward ; and his candour was almost disconcerting,  
62 since he informed the Queen that no Government could stand without Mr. Gladstone, and that she had far better send for him at once. Indeed, when she unfolded her accustomed tale of Mr. Gladstone's wrongdoing—his violence in Opposition, his Russian sympathies, and the dreadful language he had been using about Austria—Lord Hartington tried to defend him and positively said that there was not so much difference between them as the Queen seemed to think. He even urged that, whatever Mr. Gladstone might have done against the Government, he had always been loyal to the Queen—a distinction of which the sovereign had become almost incapable, as she replied that she " did not doubt this, but could not quite separate his violence against my Government, when I was with them, doing all I could to prevent war, and to raise the position of my country, from causing me deep  
63 sorrow and anxiety." Then Hartington went off to Harley Street to go through the motions of asking Gladstone to serve under him. This odd manœuvre came as something of a shock to Gladstone. For Morley, who met him dining out that week, found him " pale, preoccupied, forced—not at all like himself." It was not pleasant to be told that the Queen declined to send for him—even though, as Mrs. Gladstone said, " it is all Dizzy." It might be ; but at the same time it was highly displeasing for an ex-



Premier to feel himself excluded and to be asked to serve under Lord Hartington. His negative was categorical ; and Hartington returned to Windsor, taking the amiable Granville with him.

Their audiences were not enlivening. The unpleasant news of Mr. Gladstone's refusal to serve as a subordinate was duly intimated by Lord Hartington, who added that the public seemed to view his conduct in a more favourable light than the Queen, and that she had better send for him. This time she was more resigned, consoled with Hartington on his own deposition from the leadership, and asked him to assist her by controlling the new Prime Minister. The one bright spot was that Lord Hartington had heard that Mr. Gladstone's health was failing. Granville was sadly fluttered, kissed her hand twice, and said he feared that he had lost some of her confidence, adding by way of encouragement that he did not think Mr. Gladstone would be able to go on for long. Like Hartington, he was requested to assist the Queen by controlling Mr. Gladstone. Both noblemen advised her that it would be just as well not to begin her interview with Mr. Gladstone by informing him that she had no confidence in him, though Granville thought she might say that she regretted some of his expressions and wished facts to remain unaltered.

Then Mr. Gladstone came to Windsor. Her courtesy was quite unbroken and, to his eye, the royal demeanour was "natural under effort." She asked if he would form a Government, and he answered that he would. A few names were mentioned, and he kissed hands formally on his appointment. Then she approached thin ice, remarking on the importance of leaving facts unaltered. He quite agreed, recalling how Sir Robert Peel had recognised an Indian annexation of which he had disapproved when in Opposition. The ice grew thinner, as she observed that she was going to be frank and tell him how some of his expressions had caused her pain. He praised her frankness

and confessed that he had used strong language—stronger, perhaps, than he would have used if he had been a party-leader. The royal answer, delivered “with some good-natured archness,” was that he must bear the consequences. He said that he was quite prepared to, adding that he hoped she would not find anything to disapprove of in his general tone, and that it would be his endeavour to diminish her cares—or, at any rate, not to increase them. A parting intimation that at his age his term of office would be brief and his retirement early was quite to her taste; and she reported happily to Beaconsfield that “Mr. Gladstone looks very ill, very old and haggard and his voice feeble.”

The audience left him, “all things considered, . . . much pleased.” The Queen, it seemed to Mr. Gladstone, had been her gracious self with him, in spite of all Lord Beaconsfield’s enchantments—a shade constrained, perhaps; but frank, good-natured, and at moments positively arch. Yet she had told him less than half of the unpleasant things that she was thinking. He did not know—though his two noble colleagues did—that she had no confidence in him, or that two members of his Cabinet had been requested to control him. And none of them had the least notion of her strong party leanings. For her private hopes had been confided to Lord Beaconsfield—a Liberal split, perhaps a coalition of Whigs and Tories, and then “the Conservatives will come in stronger than ever.” Her hopes fixed on this happy consummation, she took steps to keep open her communications with Lord Beaconsfield—“I shall always let you hear how I am and what I am doing, and you must promise to let me hear from you about you. I have many about me who will write to you and I hope you will to them—so that we are not cut off. That would be too painful.” It was improbable that their correspondence would be confined to friendly trivialities, since the same royal letter went on to press Lord Beaconsfield not to let Liberal ministers down

lightly—"Do not be indulgent, but make them feel what they have brought on themselves. Indulgence and forbearance after such disgraceful and unpatriotic attacks would not be right. It is not like an ordinary change of Govt." But to Mr. Gladstone and the country that was precisely what it seemed to be. For nothing told them that it verged on treason to criticise Lord Beaconsfield's diplomacy or that the next Prime Minister was to be an object of profound suspicion, with whom his sovereign would decline to correspond "except on formal *official* matters." There was no warning of that interdict in his first audience. Yet the strange admission soon appeared in one of the Queen's letters; and the recipient of her confidences on her relations with her ministers was the Leader of the Opposition. Mistrusting Gladstone, she relied slightly on his Whig colleagues; but her real trust was in the Tories. Such was the transformation worked in her by Lord Beaconsfield; and it was plain that all the pieces on the board were set for a most disagreeable game.

## II

### ARM'S LENGTH

#### I

THE voyage opened in April, 1880 ; and the Queen, a reluctant and uncomfortable passenger, watched the assembling of the crew without enthusiasm. *Punch*, with a generous misreading of the facts, depicted a smiling figure in widow's weeds inspecting the new Cabinet and graciously remarking to its aged carpenter, " I see most of it is well seasoned—let us hope the new wood will stand well ! " That might have been her thought—it was the nation's—but the Queen actually felt nothing of the kind. For she had little confidence in any of her new surroundings. Had she not done her very best to escape from Mr. Gladstone altogether ? Yet that irrepressible old man was back once more beside her as Prime Minister ; and in case that office should prove insufficient for his energies, he was to be Chancellor of the Exchequer as well. True, he had seemed to take all that she had to say at their first audience extremely well, assuring her that he accepted all existing facts and that his bitterness against Lord Beaconsfield was past. Besides, he had informed her more than once that he did not expect to be long in office, as the burden was too great : that was one consolation. But though Lord Granville did his best to soothe her by reporting in the strictest confidence " several instances of Mr. Gladstone's desire to meet your Majesty's wishes," she could not see much sign of it. She had wished Lord Hartington to have the War Office, but now someone else was going there instead ; and Lord Coleridge would have made a less formidable Chancellor than the majestic Selborne. But Mr. Gladstone had his reasons ; and as the Queen

was on her best behaviour, she did not persist in her objections. She even consented to Lord Ripon going to India as Viceroy, although she did "not think him sufficiently strong willed or firm . . . and would have preferred some one who has more determination and energy."

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c. The best that she could hope for now was a Government of moderate Liberals controlled by Whig noblemen ; and she enquired why Mr. Goschen's name was not included. At any rate, it was a comfort that Lord Beaconsfield at his farewell audience thought them extremely moderate, although he had a shrewd suspicion (which, in duty bound, he did not conceal from his sovereign) that something was being kept from her and that she had not yet been told the worst. She learned it soon enough, when Mr. Gladstone submitted "the names of such very advanced Radicals as Mr. Chamberlain and Sir C. Dilke," to say nothing of Mr. Mundella, "one of the most violent Radicals," and "the equally violent, blind Mr. Fawcett." True, only one of them was to be in the Cabinet ; and Mr. Gladstone did his best for his alarming nominees, assuring her that Chamberlain "was very pleasing and refined in feelings and manner" and had never said a word against the royal family or "expressed Republican views," while Dilke repented of his youthful indiscretions, and Mundella "was a very religious man." As for Mr. Goschen, his disagreement with the party was really too profound for close co-operation to be possible. The Prime Minister was most persuasive, explaining that extremists had a way of becoming very moderate in office and pausing at intervals to ask if he did not weary her or take up too much of her time ; and she found him "very courteous throughout, very grateful for the way in which I received his proposals." For she consented to them all, although it was disturbing to observe how very Radical the Government was growing. She said as much to Granville, who agreed, adding consolingly that it was "safer to have

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the advanced Radicals in office than out, detached from their surroundings." Indeed, that slightly supercilious nobleman thought Chamberlain "not so strong as is supposed, but an admirable organiser, with pleasing manners," and genially assured the Queen's Private Secretary that "the Government is like bread sauce—made of two substantial elements. The few peppercorns are very obvious, and perhaps give a little flavour, but do not affect the character of the food."

But the Queen approached it without appetite. Dilke's explanations were accepted; but when the Prime Minister proposed to make Mr. Lowe a Viscount, she raised her first objection. His tactless opposition to the Royal Titles Bill stayed in her memory, and in the circumstances she felt that a mere Barony would meet the case. But the Prime Minister abounded in conclusive reasons; and though the Queen was unconvinced, she yielded gracefully. Indeed, her tone was not unpromising: "As the Queen is desirous to meet Mr. Gladstone's wishes—as he must have perceived in the manner in which she has hitherto waived all her objections to appointments which she could not regard with much satisfaction—she trusts that her readiness to do so may be reciprocated by him on other occasions."

But there were graver things to think of than Mr. Lowe's ennoblement; and she was soon pressing Granville to respect the fabric of Disraelian diplomacy. Then there was Ireland, which was beginning to look menacing, and the Russians, who always needed watching and never kept their word, to say nothing of South Africa, where Liberals might wish to disavow Sir Bartle Frere, the enterprising High Commissioner. A swift distraction was provided in the first weeks of the new Parliament by Mr. Bradlaugh. This earnest unbeliever, elected to the House of Commons, declined to take the oath; and the resulting controversy, in which the Queen and her Prime Minister were of one mind, was rich in lively incident.

Parliament, indeed, gave her considerable cause for anxiety by interfering far too much, and Mr. Gladstone was invited to check "this democratic tendency." Responding with a thoughtful essay on the powers of the House of Commons, he was reminded that the Queen's objection was less to its interference with the executive than to a tendency to trespass on her private actions, which should, she felt, be dealt with by "a sharp rebuke." For now her mind was much occupied with the difficulties of constitutional monarchy; even the Prime Minister's birthday greetings were acknowledged with a reference to the problems "of a Constitutional Sovereign especially—of a formal one." The bright dream of Disraelian autocracy had faded, and she was waking bravely to the cold light of day.

Her judgments on affairs were quite as shrewd as ever; the common sense that she had used against the tax on matches was still apparent in her comment on the new Budget—"The tax on beer she also regrets. . . . The richer classes who drink wine and who are not in any way restricted in their indulgences, can well afford to *pay* for wine. But the poor can ill afford any additional tax on what in many parts is about their only beverage"—although a more antique prejudice seemed to dictate her observation that "the elementary Education was of too high a standard." Her sense of the sanctity of obligations to landlords was slightly shocked by the prospect of an Irish Land Bill, and her alarms were all confided to Lord Granville; for, as she presently informed Lord Beaconsfield, "I write and telegraph very strongly to the Secretary for Foreign Affairs—for I *never* write except on formal *official* matters to the Prime Minister!" The recipient of these unusual confidences expressed a deep concern—"I grieve that your Majesty's relations with your Majesty's present Ministers are not those of entire confidence, but that is unhappily in the nature of things. It is not less to be deplored." (One almost catches the

deep note of Lord Beaconsfield's distress.) "The realm suffers by your Majesty's reserve." This partial ostracism of the Prime Minister was a novel practice (and the royal announcement of it to the Leader of the Opposition was more novel still); and it is not altogether clear that Gladstone realised his exclusion from her confidence, since he had resumed his former habit of sending little extracts from his reading which he thought might interest the Queen. Indeed, his audiences left him satisfied and recording that "nothing could be more kindly and agreeable than she was. . . . She seemed quite fair & willing to listen to reason. She had also cooked up an objection to Trevelyan; but this melted 'like a mockery King of Snow.' However I promised to say one word to him about the old escapade." The royal tone, so far as he could judge, was not unpromising, if only they could both avoid causes of major disagreement.

Unhappily, events were too strong for them. The first threat to their fragile understanding came from South Africa, when ministers decided to recall Sir Bartle Frere. For the activities of that spirited proconsul were more in harmony with Lord Beaconsfield's imperial longings than with the more modest tastes of Mr. Gladstone's colleagues; and the Queen was eloquent upon the injustice of this concession to "an extreme section of the House of Commons" and the resulting growth of "an impression that Governors abroad are *only* to expect support *at home* from *political* Allies or from that *party* which *nominated* them to their post." But though she disapproved, consent was not withheld; and a slight indisposition of Mr. Gladstone's presently evoked the kindest expressions of royal anxiety about his health. They differed again, when he proposed Lord Derby for the Garter; and this was scarcely to be wondered at, since Derby, who had commanded Gladstone's gratitude by disagreeing with Lord Beaconsfield to the point of



resigning from his Cabinet and was now a Liberal convert, was hardly commended to the Queen by that circumstance. It was no merit in her eyes to have left Lord Beaconsfield in the lurch, and the royal pen was more than usually pointed in its dissection of his conduct. Gladstone was swift in his withdrawal, promptly substituting an innocuous duke ; and their precarious harmony resumed, only to be threatened once more as the Government disclosed an awkward tendency to be unkind to Turkey—  
 “ She will not consent to war with our old ally Turkey, whom the country always supported.” As Mr. Gladstone was to speak at the Lord Mayor’s banquet, she warned him to be very careful what he said, and he received the warning with due submission ; indeed, his performance earned him tempered thanks from Balmoral.

But the clouds began to gather nearer home ; for the Irish sky was full of menace. All her private correspondents were loud with warning, and she passed on their fears to Mr. Gladstone. But his replies seemed rather meagre ; it was unsatisfying to be told that the subject had been discussed in Cabinet. Lord Beaconsfield always told her more than that ; he used to let her know what all his colleagues thought and which of them was wrong and which was right and how the discussion had gone round the long table in Downing Street. But when she telegraphed to Mr. Gladstone for more particulars, he responded with a lucid analysis of the Irish Question and a marked absence of *personalia*. She warned him against the Land League ; and her warning was dutifully circulated to all his colleagues. As the news grew darker, the Queen made it plain that in her view Coercion should precede concessions ; and when Mr. Bright and Mr. Chamberlain made speeches on the subject of the House of Lords, it seemed to justify her worst misgivings. Small wonder that her mind went back to happier days, to the distant Council forty years ago when Mr. Gladstone was sworn in at Claremont and Sir Robert Peel was there and

the Duke and Lord Aberdeen—"That was an admirable Government!" She had not seemed to think so then in the first anguish of her parting from Lord Melbourne. But now it gleamed across the years, a painful contrast with the anxieties of 1880, with an uncertain future in  
 77 Ireland and South Africa, with Lord Beaconsfield writing her the most depressing letters, with dreadful Radicals in office and the continual problem of Mr. Gladstone. She did her best to get on with him, giving way upon nearly everything, and even brought herself to ask him and his wife to Windsor. The Prime Minister, almost painfully aware that he was not *persona grata* on private occasions,  
 78 had touchingly expressed to Granville "a dread lest your Majesty should feel, on account of his official position, an obligation to receive him socially, more than your Majesty would otherwise desire." He had been down to Sandringham to see the Prince of Wales; but his doctor would not let him go to Windsor. They were not on easy terms, and his tendency to fill the Government with Radicals did little to improve things. She had consented to his first instalment; Mr. Chamberlain was in the Cabinet and his associates in minor posts. Then Mr. G. O. Trevelyan, of whom she had unsatisfactory memories, was added; and now there was to be another  
 724 Radical recruit. This was too much; and "the Queen hopes the next appointment to your Government will be made from the party of the Moderate Liberals." Had not two members of the Cabinet made speeches against the House of Lords? Lord Beaconsfield wrote to inform her that he was getting ready to defend his country's  
 79 threatened institutions "with only one purpose—the maintenance of the settled constitution of this country, of which the authority of the Crown, and its just Prerogatives, forms not the least important portion." It was all most alarming; and the year went out upon her prayer "that the many clouds which now surround the political Horizon and her Empire may by God's blessing

be dispelled and that Mr. Gladstone may be guided by Him to do what is just and right ! ”

## 2

On New Year's Day, 1881, the Queen's misgivings were confided to her Journal—" a poor Government, Ireland in a state of total lawlessness, and war at the Cape, of a very serious nature ! I feel very anxious and have no one to lean on." It was a dismal outlook, and in her survey she did not even spare herself :

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“ I feel how sadly deficient I am, and how oversensitive and irritable, and how uncontrollable my temper is, when annoyed and hurt. But I am so overdone, so vexed, and in such distress about my country, that that must be my excuse. I will pray daily for God's help to improve.”

Such moods were rare with her ; for self-pity came more easily than self-examination. But the confession, cruel as it was, was not unjust. Her nerves were often raw ; the interminable loneliness, which had been mitigated by Disraeli's daring comradeship, resumed its grey dominion ; and as the days went by, she had nothing but her cares to think of. At such moments it was so easy to relieve her feelings with a hasty telegram to the Prime Minister or a summary refusal of some submission. But their precarious collaboration was sadly endangered by these impulses. For the royal objections must not be left unanswered ; serious proposals could not be lightly dropped ; and Mr. Gladstone was continually forced into argument. It could not be avoided, if he was to treat his sovereign with due respect—and he was nothing if not respectful of the Monarchy. Her views must not be ignored ; but if his country was to be governed according to his notion of its highest interests, he must convince the Queen. No other course was open to him. He must convince her, as he had con-

vinced so many of his fellow-countrymen, by cogent and reiterated argument. That sad necessity rose between them, involving him in a semblance of continual debate with her decisions, which the Queen found distasteful in the extreme and contrasted bitterly with the unvarying compliance of Lord Beaconsfield. It was a tragedy, which could only end in mutual irritation, since the Queen, seemed to find in her Prime Minister a ready controversialist rather than a collaborator, while Gladstone could not fail to be exasperated by the daily stream of royal communications, each waiting for its answer, which stood between him and the crowding problems of an uneasy world.

729 The first difficulty of the year arose over the terms of the Queen's Speech, in which it was proposed to state that the British occupation of Afghanistan would not be unduly prolonged. The Queen demurred; a telegram to Mr. Gladstone announced her strong objections; and Sir William Harcourt and Lord Spencer, who were at Osborne, had a most unpleasant time. (The royal pen recorded a  
80 Council meeting, in which "I spoke to no one, and the Ministers nearly tumbled over each other going out.") But the Cabinet met her with an assurance which the Queen found adequate, and Mr. Gladstone's deep regret  
734 was conveyed in a manner that commanded her entire satisfaction. The incident was closed, but not before she had sent Prince Leopold to consult Lord Beaconsfield upon the constitutional position, receiving from that  
81 source the highly questionable doctrine that "the principle . . . that the Speech of the Sovereign is only the Speech of the Ministers is a principle not known to the British Constitution. It is only a piece of Parliamentary gossip."

82 But when Gladstone found himself at issue with the forces of disorder in the House of Commons, her sympathy was ready, and the royal influence was used to mobilise Conservative support for the Government. She even

pressed the Prime Minister to spare himself the labour of his nightly letter from the Treasury Bench after late sittings protracted until dawn by Irish obstruction. The 744  
dismal course of operations in South Africa saddened her greatly, although she sturdily refused to admit that Laing's Nek was more than a "repulse—(*not defeat*) for the 744  
attack seems to have been most brilliant." But Majuba did not admit of argument, though she was anxious that in the ensuing negotiations there should be no admission of weakness. Her letters rang with warnings against avoidable concessions, which might "encourage the Agitators . . . while the *Natives* losing *all faith in our firmness of purpose* will *never* cease to give us trouble— & there will be fresh wars—more expense—& above all more precious lives lost!" It was all a most depressing contrast with the halcyon days when Lord Beaconsfield moved fleets and armies up and down the world and nobody was hurt; and Mr. Gladstone's unexciting settlements, by which foreigners were left to govern their own countries, were little to her taste.

But major matters seemed to loom less in their intercourse than the proposal that Sir Garnet Wolseley should be made a peer. That enterprising soldier, whom a miscellaneous career of conquest in Canada, Ashanti, and South Africa had endeared to his fellow-countrymen (though less, perhaps, to all his fellow-soldiers) as 'Our Only General,' was a strenuous practitioner of Army reform. Contemporary slang proclaimed 'all Sir Garnet' — as a synonym of perfection; and the trim, bemedalled <sup>O</sup> figure of the 'modern major-general' was applauded <sup>14</sup> nightly through 1880 in *The Pirates of Penzance*. Not that he was a Liberal in politics; for his diary devoutly <sup>C</sup> hailed "the Queen's birthday. God bless her and <sup>V</sup> preserve her from the dangers in which Mr. Gladstone's <sup>a</sup> policy is certain sooner or later to involve the country. <sup>S</sup> She has been taught by those who dislike me to regard me <sup>S</sup> as a Radical. I think she would change her opinion if she <sup>15</sup>

read my journal." But his professional opinions were advanced, a circumstance that hardly smoothed relations with the Duke of Cambridge, who retained Crimean predilections; and the Commander-in-Chief viewed his Quartermaster-General with unconcealed misgivings. The Government, proposing to embark on a career of daring innovation which included the substitution of county designations for the historic regimental numbers and the abolition—painful to military tailors—of regimental facings, conceived a notion that the progress of these measures through the House of Lords would be facilitated by the presence of an expert in sympathy with the reforms. So Sir Garnet's name was submitted for a peerage. But its reception was highly inauspicious, 755 the Queen expressing deep surprise, complaining that he constantly opposed the Duke of Cambridge to the point of insubordination, and repeating "*most emphatically* that she will NOT *approve* of a Peerage being conferred on Sir Garnet Wolseley." Returning bravely to the charge, the Prime Minister restated his theme with persuasive variations; but there was no perceptible 757 diminution of the royal emphasis in a reply, which Gladstone passed on to Granville with slightly humorous helplessness—"Here is a 'no surrender'—'non possumus'—nail the colours to the mast, break the bridges and burn the boats, letter!" What were ministers to do? Mr. Gladstone used his best endeavours to improve the Queen's opinion of Sir Garnet. A further argument (with 81 aid in drafting from the tactful Granville) was sent to Windsor; but all was to no purpose, each party to the controversy remaining wholly unconvinced of the other's merits.

Larger issues began to rise between them, when Irish Land impelled the Duke of Argyll to resign. For the Queen pressed Gladstone to modify his scheme in deference to the doubts of such supporters and wrote to his 82 resigning colleague enquiring eagerly "what your views

and objections are, as it will be very valuable to me to know." But tragedy descended on her; Lord Beaconsfield was failing fast; and a stream of messengers from Windsor came to Curzon Street. Even the unaccustomed figure of Mr. Gladstone was on the doorstep—"Went up to inquire for Lord B. . . . May the Almighty be near his pillow. . . . Went up again to inquire for Lord B." But he was soon past all enquiries; and the Prime Minister wrote offering a public funeral even before the Queen suggested it. Her grief was painful; and this fresh bereavement seemed to leave her lonelier than ever. Gladstone's condolences were manly—"Mr. Gladstone would not seek, nor could he earn, Your Majesty's regard by dissembling the amount or character of the separation between Lord Beaconsfield and himself. But it does not in any degree blind him to the extraordinary powers of the deceased statesman, or to many remarkable qualities, in regard to whom Mr. Gladstone, well aware of his own marked inferiority, can only desire to profit by a great example." The Queen was grateful; his speech on the proposal of a monument earned her thanks—"She has been *much gratified* by it. . . . She *knows* (and can *judge* by her own feelings) that Lord Beaconsfield's friends are *very* much gratified by Mr. Gladstone's fine speech, which will abound greatly to his honour"—and Mr. Gladstone was rewarded by royal hopes that "he is better & will not stay up too late at the House." The Queen's suggestion of a baronetcy for the dead statesman's brother was promptly accepted by the Prime Minister. But when he sought to inaugurate the new era of harmony by a revival of the Wolseley peerage, he fared no better than before.

Affairs apart, he did his best, celebrating her Accession day with a comparison to Queen Elizabeth that would have done credit to his predecessor, and interesting her in a deserving movement for the suppression of gaming at Monte Carlo. But his attitude to Irish landlords

alarmed her gravely ; and he was inclined to resent interference by the House of Lords in a tone which moved her to inform Lord Granville " that high-handed dictator style of Mr. Gladstone will *not* do." There was more trouble at the Horse Guards about Sir Garnet ; and when the Prime Minister insisted on another Radical as Under-Secretary, the customary protest moved him to an unusual expression of his feelings. For he circulated the royal letter to three of his colleagues with an outspoken minute :—

803 " I think this intolerable. It is by courtesy only that these appointments are made known to H.M."

It was unlike his old restraint to make his meaning quite so plain. But even Mr. Gladstone's patience began to fray under the perpetual friction. For it was humiliating to try so hard and to make quite so little progress.

After one audience that year his diary confessed :  
 80 " She is as ever perfect in her courtesy but as to confidence she holds me now at arm's length." That was the key-note. They were at arm's length ; and there seemed little prospect of reducing the distance that separated them. It was most disheartening for Gladstone, and he soon began to lose all inclination to make further efforts.  
 81 For a later entry recorded " much civility . . . but I am always outside an iron ring, and without any desire, had I the power to, break it through." But even the desire  
 82 { had left him now.

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Yet she could still write him a charming letter, when he announced the birth of a grand-child in the first week of 1882. His audiences that year passed off without misadventure ; but there was a growing tendency on both sides to avoid the real subjects that were in their minds.  
 82 He had already found her " frank & kind as usual, avoiding all sore & tender places." Kind, perhaps ;



but scarcely frank, since her avoidance of sore places was a plain admission that there were topics upon which the Queen and her Prime Minister could hardly touch with safety. Before the year was out, he was privileged to enjoy "a free & kindly conversation on the see of Canterbury"; but of what use was it to spend the afternoon exchanging amiable commonplaces over the Rev. Randall Davidson's opinion that Bishop Benson would be the best successor to Archbishop Tait, when both their minds were full of Ireland and Egypt? His diary recorded a further interview on "most difficult ground, but aided by her beautiful manners we got over it better than might have been expected." Decorum was preserved; but perfect manners were a slender bridge across the gulf between the sovereign and her Prime Minister.

The gulf, alas! was widening. Gladstone might do his best to reassure her as to his faith in the imperial connection with Ireland and the invariable soundness of his views on royal grants; he was still making efforts to satisfy her upon Dilke's recantation of his juvenile republicanism and Mr. Chamberlain's unhappy aptitude for pointed sayings of a most disturbing character. But the Prime Minister's tendency to make excuses for the Irish—and, worse still, concessions to them—became more evident with every week that passed; and when tragedy stalked across the body of a murdered Chief Secretary in Phoenix Park, the Queen was loud in her outcries against Mr. Gladstone, "backed as he will be by his *evil genius* Mr. Chamberlain," and "this dreadfully Radical Government which contains many thinly-veiled *Republicans*." Her worst fears were justified, and she seemed to see him now for what he was—"this most dangerous man. . . . The mischief Mr. Gladstone does is *incalculable*; instead of stemming the current and downward course of Radicalism, which he could do *perfectly*, he *heads and encourages it*." That was the disastrous thing about him: the Queen's convictions stayed very

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much as the Disraelian mould had left them, but her Prime Minister's were moving with the times—those dreadful times of the 'Invincibles' and Mr. Parnell and O'Donovan Rossa and the dynamiters and the uncomfortably creeping tide of Radicalism. How heartily she wished him out of office now; indeed, she said so to Lord Hartington. But all hopes of his retirement seemed to have faded; his health had obstinately ceased to fail, and the indomitable old man positively seemed to thrive on difficulties. Lord Granville made a most disheartening report that the Prime Minister had told him he had never felt so well at the end of a session; and the more insoluble the Irish Question, the more impracticable it became for Gladstone to retire, leaving the problem unresolved. It fascinated him; he had always felt himself to have a mission towards Ireland; and the darker Ireland loomed upon the Queen's horizon, the more certain it became that Mr. Gladstone would continue to loom there as well.

That year a further problem was added to the witches' brew confronting British statesmanship in 1882. For Egypt swerved towards disintegration; and an awkward possibility of European intervention appeared. At first it seemed as though there would be combined action by Great Britain and France, and the Queen shrewdly advised that "we sh<sup>ld</sup> try & get disentangled from the French." Then the proposed castigation of Arabi brought suggestions of Turkish participation; but she had learnt the Gladstonian lesson well enough by now to mistrust the Turk, and the Queen hoped "that we shall get clear of the Turks all together for she is *convinced* that they w<sup>ld</sup> join Arabi against us." The Cabinet, which had decided with profound reluctance (and the loss of Mr. Bright) to let the fleet bombard the rebels in the forts of Alexandria, resolved still more unwillingly to send out a British army and restore order in the country. As usual, Sir Garnet Wolseley was to command, adding Egyptian laurels to his variegated wreath; the Guards were off to

Tel-el-Kébir, and the Prince of Wales was anxious to go with them, positively threatening that, if leave were refused, he should resign his commission and go out as a civilian. But the delights of active service were not for heirs apparent in 1882; the Queen appealed to Mr. Gladstone, who was firm in her support; and the Cabinet's authority was invoked to keep the Prince at home. But the Duke of Connaught, who was a serving soldier, went out with his brigade; and Granville's watchful tact suggested that enquiries on the subject by the Prime Minister would have a good effect at Court. A reference by Mr. Gladstone to the Duke's achievements in the field much gratified the Queen; but the war in Egypt did little to improve her opinion of Liberal ministers. For though they took the British flag to Egypt, they were reluctant empire-builders; and the Queen watched with deep misgivings their tendency to restrict the military men. Besides, they seemed to wish to bring the troops home prematurely after their brief, victorious campaign. That deeply exercised the Queen, who could not forget (and did not refrain from an unpleasant reminder to Mr. Gladstone) "the *unfortunate result* of the haste with which our Troops were brought back from Zululand & South Africa, & the consequent humiliation & loss of prestige which ensued in the Transvaal.—This should be a *warning* to us in the *present instance*." Such counsels were unwelcome and only served to emphasise the gulf between them.

For the gulf was widening, and even Gladstone's patience was a little strained by the constant necessity for argument. Divergence upon Irish matters moved her to a steady rain of communications; and once the Prime Minister was stung into recording "another fidgety Telegram from Balmoral" and a comparison of his royal mistress to a particularly trying colleague "who used to see *one* side of a question so clearly." It was his duty to convince the Queen; but the duty was manifestly growing onerous. Mr. Gladstone had not, had never any

difficulty in giving reasons for his actions ; vast numbers of his countrymen found them conclusive ; but if the Queen persistently declined to see them, he became a little desperate. Her attitude about the troops in Egypt struck him as supremely unreasonable ; and he was moved to quite unusual candour, writing to Hartington :

89 " I must own that I think the Queen's resolute attempts to disturb & impede the reduction of the army in Egypt, are (to use a plain word) intolerable. It is my firm intention not to give in, so far as I am personally concerned, for a moment to proceedings almost as unconstitutional as they are irrational ; though the unreasonableness of her ideas is indeed such that it is entitled to the palm in comparison with their other characteristics."

Given his veneration of the throne, it took a great deal to evoke such comments from Mr. Gladstone. But as he faced his daily task of dealing with the Queen, a mood of  
100 despair began to settle on him. Early in the next year he was walking with Rosebery at Hawarden and, in the intervals of throwing his stick at a delinquent dog for digging up the flowers, exclaimed with positive ferocity that the Queen alone was enough to kill any man.

That was an unhappy mood for the transaction of their multifarious business. There was still a mild exchange  
898 of little gifts and courtesies between them ; a candle-lamp was graciously received ; and when Dean Wellesley died, her melancholy interest in the event was amply  
912 satisfied by Mr. Gladstone's narrative of his last moments and the obsequies at Strathfieldsaye. After the victory  
908 in Egypt Sir Garnet Wolseley's peerage went through triumphantly ; and a threat of trouble with the House of  
101 Lords upon an Irish Bill impelled the Queen to put pressure on Lord Salisbury in the direction of concessions to the Government. But when it was proposed to bring Lord Derby back to office, her misgivings were revived in force.

For if Liberal ministers were quite bad enough, a Tory renegade was almost more than she could bear - "The Queen w<sup>ld</sup> far rather see Sir C. Dilke in the Cabinet than Ld Derby, for the former *has right* views on foreign Politics & knows what the honour of this Country requires." The first suggestion was to place Derby at the India Office; and the Queen was loud in her objections, informing Gladstone that his new recruit had always been "a great trouble to all the Cabinets he had been in." But their conversation on the thorny subject passed off far better than might have been expected; the Prime Minister was most persuasive and, by a skilful change of front, proposed that Derby should become Colonial Secretary. This alteration seemed to mollify the Queen, and she consented, although there was a slightly ominous warning that the new Secretary of State "cannot expect a cordial reception." But the appointment on any terms was a distinct victory for Mr. Gladstone, and he received a friendly warning not to "let himself & Lord Granville on any acc<sup>t</sup> be influenced in foreign politics by Lord Derby."

That was, she felt, the worst of Liberals: they were lamentably prone to weakness in international affairs. For by her standards, which had become quite Palmerstonian under Lord Beaconsfield's instruction, their patriotism was somehow lacking in conviction. True, they had sent the Guards to Egypt—but only when it was quite impossible to avoid doing so, and then with manifest reluctance; and now that they were inclined to weary in well-doing and to end the British occupation—as soon as possible, while the Queen's prophetic eye was already fixed upon "the movements of this new false Prophet," proclaimed by a few zealots as the Mahdi and stirring obscurely in the depths of the Sudan.

In the first weeks of 1883 the burden of affairs began to tell on Mr. Gladstone; his sleep deserted him; and

944 a royal warning to be careful what he said in Scotland was answered by the welcome intelligence that his speaking tour was cancelled by doctor's orders. The Queen's solicitude increased, when he took refuge on the Riviera, and her anxiety was genuine. Granville was  
103 asked to press him to take a thorough rest, and the Queen suggested in the kindest way that a peerage would reduce the strain on the Prime Minister. His reply was unconvinced, but grateful:—

104 “ It is really most kind of the Queen to testify such an interest and the question is how to answer her. . . . I suppose the substance would be to express my gratitude, & say that thus encouraged by her I shall not scruple to open the subject if I should find reason to believe it would be beneficial but that viewing my age & all other circumstances I do not at present anticipate it.”

Conveyed by Granville, this answer made an excellent  
105 impression ; and “ the Queen is glad Mr. Gladstone took the offer of the Peerage so well.” She seemed to be a little shy of him, even to realise that he needed managing ; and in her new care about his health there was plain evidence of an admission that, where so many of his colleagues were deplorable, she almost needed Mr. Gladstone.

But her anxieties were groundless. An eyewitness at Cannes reported that the invalid had walked eight miles  
106 uphill in pouring rain—“ the last 6 without any rest excepting occasional stopping for emphasis and enforcement ”—and the voluble pedestrian was soon back at work, quite unimpaired and full of arguments about the Balkans and South Africa and the removal of the Duke of Wellington's statue from Hyde Park Corner. His  
960 consolations, when she lost her faithful Brown, were almost Disraelian ; and when Mr. Chamberlain made another of his dreadful speeches, the Prime Minister

warned him quite sharply that "all that belongs to the person and family of the sovereign are specially in our charge and are to be watched over by us with careful and even jealous respect." He was most obliging about appointing Mr. Randall Davidson to be Dean of Windsor ; and they were in friendly correspondence on the strictly unofficial subjects of St. Francis de Sales (whom Mr. Gladstone felt to "belong to the more modern, and less healthy and manly type of saintship") and the excesses of Continental anti-Semitism, upon which he had inspired the publication of a review article that pleased the Queen and, in the royal judgment, "shows up some German Professors very well." But there was no perceptible increase in their harmony upon official topics. For his sovereign was still insisting under military advice that she "feels very strongly that the withdrawal of our troops from Cairo and Egypt must be put off, she believes *since die* . . . Sir E. Wood can confirm this better than anyone." Gladstone, who always found her martial mood peculiarly distasteful, passed on the royal note to Granville with the bleak comment : "A curious letter—after forty odd years experience of Rule, from a warm admirer of Sir R. Peel and of Lord Aberdeen ! " Granville's sole rejoinder was, "Alas !" and two heads were sadly shaken over the Queen's apostasy.

A further incident clouded their cordiality that autumn. Mr. Gladstone took his holiday with a select party (including the Poet Laureate) in one of Sir Donald Currie's admirable liners. Crowds shouted "Gladstone" at every railway station, all the way from Chester to Barrow ; and roars of "Tennyson" and "Gladstone" from the shore cheered their departure. A few days of strenuous conversation and gentle sightseeing brought them to Kirkwall, where it occurred to Mr. Tennyson that he would like a day in Copenhagen. Denmark was not so far away ; and, deep in literary talk, they crossed the North Sea. From that moment their modest cruise

became a royal progress. The King of Denmark asked them to dinner to meet the Czar, the King and Queen of Greece, the Princess of Wales, and a galaxy of royal relatives. This hospitality was returned at a lunch-party on board the liner. Guns roared salutes ; flags fluttered everywhere ; the company drank everybody's health ; and Mr. Gladstone made a little speech. But the echoes had not died away before another royal note fell on his ear. On reaching Denmark he had written to the Queen reporting his excursion and apologising for his omission to ask formal leave to land on foreign soil. The consequences of his lapse were quite unpredictable, as this cheerful intimation reached his sovereign in the least of holiday moods. " Her unfeigned astonishment at Mr. Gladstone's want of *all knowledge*, apparently, of what is due to the Sovereign he serves " was conveyed to Granville all unsweetened, together with a royal commination on " this *escapade*." Indeed, a casual reader of the Queen's letter might have been excused for believing the Prime Minister had been guilty of cloping with a lady-in-waiting rather than the milder crime of touching at a foreign port in company with all his family and Mr. Tennyson. But this reproof was not enough ; a sharp letter intimated her displeasure to Mr. Gladstone in terms which (he confessed to Granville) " made me rather angry . . . I should call the letter—for the first time—somewhat unmannerly." The Prime Minister accepted the rebuke with due humility, deploring the unpremeditated consequences of his breach of etiquette and pleading gravely that " increasing weariness of mind, under public cares for which he feels himself less and less fitted, may have blunted the faculty of anticipation, with which he was never very largely endowed." If it was a defect of Mr. Gladstone's to be unduly formal with the Queen, it could hardly be felt that this experiment in informality had been conspicuously successful.

But the excursion had one happy consequence ; for



Mr. Tennyson was made a peer. The Bard's taste for impressive headgear slightly alarmed Gladstone, who enquired in jocular concern whether he could be accessory to introducing that hat into the House of Lords. But when he submitted the proposal, the Queen consented graciously, and the Laureate was duly ennobled. Then they returned to the absorbing round of official business and to the Queen's uneasy feeling that Mr. Gladstone was not nearly firm enough—"She has no doubt that Lord Granville feels as Lord Palmerston did; who with all his many faults, had the honour and power of his country strongly at heart, and so had Lord Beaconsfield. *But she does not feel that Mr. Gladstone has. Or at least he puts the House of Commons and party first; thinking no doubt that he is doing what is best by keeping this country out of everything and swallowing offences . . . As regards Egypt and the Troops, the Queen will not give her consent to their withdrawal from Egypt. . . . She fears Mr. Gladstone and Lord Hartington are inclined to be weak upon it.*" Within a month a wavering advance against the Mahdi was made by an Egyptian army under Hicks Pasha. The great square of unsteady soldiers moved slowly forward into Kordofan with their starving camels. They had no water and false guides; and in the depths of a great forest south of El Obeid a rush of Mahdists blotted them out. If the Egyptians could not hold the Sudan against the Mahdi, it would be best for them to evacuate the interior; and the Government resolved to advise them in that sense. The Queen discussed the point with Mr. Gladstone; and everyone seemed quite agreed upon evacuation, Sir Evelyn Wood writing from Cairo that "the happiest result would be that Egypt should lose all the interior country south of Assouan."

The tragedy in Kordofan left the main current of the Queen's correspondence undisturbed; and an approach to harmony with Mr. Gladstone permitted them to touch on less official topics—old memories of Claremont and

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- 1007 the quotation from Byron which the Poet Laureate had kindly furnished for the pedestal of John Brown's statue—and there were gracious enquiries after Mrs. Gladstone and an exchange of good wishes for 1884.

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- The year opened on their decision to withdraw the Egyptians from their untenable possessions in the Sudan. The Cabinet felt no doubts; and the Queen was clear that "as the Soudan cannot be reconquered we must be prepared to take the responsibility of the act," though she retained her tendency to scold ministers for "half measures and indecision." But the forefront of politics seemed likely to be filled by a proposal to extend the franchise; and the despatch of General Gordon with instructions "to go up and evacuate" seemed a small matter. This noble eccentric, whose renunciation of the world verged on the suicidal, was speeding southward across Europe on his way to Egypt, while the Queen lent Mr. Gladstone an advance copy of *More Leaves from the Journal of a Life in the Highlands* (which he read with the reflection that "it is innocence itself"). She was half inclined to claim credit for Gordon's mission, and her impatience with the Government was freely expressed to Sir Evelyn Wood—"Why this was *not* done long ago and why the right thing is never done till it is absolutely extorted from those who are in authority, is inexplicable to the Queen. Over and over again she has urged by letter and by cypher that energetic measures were necessary; but *not* till the whole country became alarmed—and, she flatters herself also, in deference to her very strong pressurè—was anything done." It was not altogether plain what energetic measures were required by an Egyptian evacuation of the Sudan. But the Queen's martial temper was uneasy in retreat; and when the military authorities pressed an unwilling Cabinet for a punitive expedition in the Eastern Sudan,
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she was strong for "a demonstration of strength & show & determination" in the interests of British prestige in the East. Gladstone passed on the royal letter a little wearily to Granville—"I send you herewith . . . a letter from the Queen: Horse Guards all over . . . Gordon is now the key to the whole position and everything shows the great importance of the answers we may expect shortly to arrive from him." The courtly Granville suggested almost disrespectfully in his reply that "the Queen should ask the Empress Eugenie, whether she now thinks she was right in urging her Husband to undertake the Mexican, as well as the Franco-German War." The Government, at any rate, were firm in their refusal to be drawn into unnecessary wars, although a strictly limited operation on the Red Sea coast elicited the Queen's applause.

Meanwhile, the nation's chosen instrument had reached Khartoum; and Baring's desk in Cairo was littered with the daily sheaf of telegrams from Gordon. That perfect functionary had begun to fear the worst, when Gordon on his way through Cairo launched a particularly daring proposal founded, as he announced, upon a "mystic feeling." Sir Evelyn Baring, whose *forte* was public finance, was remarkably immune from mystic feelings; and when Gordon began to use official telegrams as a running chronicle of passing fancies, bewilderment increased at Cairo and in Downing Street. It had always been his way to put all his moods on paper; readers of his earlier letters from Central Africa were warned that they "are my journal and impressions of the moment. I cannot be bound by them. . . . These letters are my journal, so do not nail me down to anything I may say I propose to do." Besides, he was a little apt to claim a right to "do what I like, and what God in His mercy may direct me to do." For, to his deep religious sense, "He is the GOVERNOR-GENERAL, and I am only His useless agent, by whom He deigns to work His will."

Such a faith, however admirable, in divine inspiration might prove incompatible with strict obedience to orders. Not that Gordon's official masters were exacting. Indeed, they relied almost touchingly upon his judgment; but that judgment was itself sadly impaired by his fatalism, by a religious tendency to resign himself happily to the decrees of Providence. He had rejoiced in it for years,\*  
 184 writing that "it is a delightful thing to be a fatalist." His passive creed was stated in a vivid parable:

185 "We are pianos, events play on us. Gladstone is no more important in the events of life than we are; the importance is, how he acts when played on. So is it with the bedridden woman; the angels and powers watch her and Gladstone alike; both are equally interesting; that broken cup is the same as the Irish troubles."

Gordon had been sent to Khartoum in order to wind up the Egyptian occupation and effect a prompt withdrawal. But with such mental habits it was a little doubtful how far he could bring himself to interfere with the course of events or, if he did, what action he proposed to take. It was impossible to tell from his innumerable telegrams. Did they mean what they said? Plainly some of them did not, since their successors contradicted them with distressing frequency. And, worst of all, it was by no means certain that he would do as he was told.

On the way up to Khartoum he was tolerably clear that  
 186 "all will be settled in six months." But as he settled into the big palace by the river, doubts began to grow on him. True, *The Times* correspondent was quite positive that  
 187 "the holding of Khartoum is bosh." But Gordon was not so sure. His busy mind was haunted by a nightmare  
 188 vision of the Mahdi in odious triumph and the decline of British prestige throughout the East. Besides, there were his people in Khartoum to be provided for; it was

not easy to arrange a Biblical migration of Egyptian traders and officials, even while the road was open. But if he waited until the road was closed, who could foresee the consequences? There were, of course, his orders; but they left him a good deal of latitude; and he gradually drifted with a quiet conscience to his desperate resolve to "smash the Mahdi." That would not be easy, so long as ministers declined to send out an expedition for the purpose. But if Providence required it, he must change their minds for them. No doubt they would be angry—"I expect Her Majesty's Government are in a precious rage with me for holding out and forcing their hand"—but that could not be helped. 129

Such was the formidable collaborator adopted by the Cabinet in January, 1884. The Queen approved; the Horse Guards and the Opposition united in concurrence; and the entire press was unanimous in their support. A grateful nation cheered the picturesque expedient of "Chinese Gordon for the Sudan"; and the only fault found by their royal critic was that they had not sent him sooner. But the choice, so universally approved, turned out to be a profound error. Gladstone confessed it later: 130

"Clearly we made a mistake, great but greatly excusable; the cause was insufficient knowledge of our man, whom we rather took on trust from the public impressions, & from newspaper accounts, which were probably not untrue, but so far from the whole truth that we were misled."

A further diagnosis put the point more clearly still:

"Gordon was a hero, and a hero of heroes; but we ought to have known that a hero of heroes is not the proper person to give effect at a distant point, and in most difficult circumstances, to the views of ordinary men. It was unfortunate that he should claim the hero's privilege by turning upside down and inside out every 131

idea and intention with which he had left England, and for which he had obtained our approval."

The choice of General Gordon was the first (and perhaps the last) mistake in Mr. Gladstone's policy in the Sudan. After that tragic error the rest was almost bound to follow; and since the fatal consequences left an indelible mark on his relations with the Queen, it may be noted that the initial blunder was committed with her complete approval.

1021 The Queen was anxious from the start. In February she "trembles for General Gordon's safety. If anything befalls *him* the result will be awful." This mood inclined her to support all the demands that emanated from his busy telegraph. The first articulate request from Khartoum was for the nomination of a notorious slave-trader (who was to be made K.C.M.G. for the occasion) as his successor. It was a dramatic *coup* in the spirit of his own performances in China and would provide an alternative to Mahdist government in the Sudan.

1031 But the Cabinet was unconvinced, feeling that "Zebir would not be regarded by public opinion in this country as qualified for such an office"; and there was not the slightest doubt that the appointment would have roused opposition far beyond the pious circles normally controlled by Exeter Hall. The Queen was highly indignant, instructing her Secretary to telegraph that the decisive factor should be "*the good and permanent tranquillity of Egypt . . . and not public opinion HERE* which is fickle and changeable." Her indignation rose, as she warned ministers that "the Queen will *hold* the Government responsible for any sort of misfortune which *will* happen,"

1034 though she admitted candidly that "British troops cannot be sent" (favouring an Indian contingent). But she continued to insist that the Prime Minister had told her "Gordon must be trusted and supported and yet what he asked for repeatedly nearly five weeks

ago has been refused. If not only for humanity's sake, for the honour of the Government and the nation he must not be abandoned." There was no question of abandoning him in March, 1884, with the road wide open from Khartoum to Cairo. But as the spring went by and Gordon apparently declined to use it, they drifted into an unhappy argument upon the theme of expeditions, which were palpably superfluous for the relief of Khartoum (since it was not yet besieged), but were designed by his resourceful mind for "smashing up" the Mahdi. Lord Hartington insisted doggedly that "General Gordon certainly when he left England distinctly understood that no British troops would be employed in relieving him or the garrisons and was confident of his ability to accomplish his task without such assistance." That was unchallengeable, so long as he confined his task to the comparatively humble mission of evacuating the Sudan. But if he enlarged it to include the destruction of the Mahdi and the establishment of an alternative administration, what limit could be set to his requirements? It dawned upon the Cabinet in April that "General Gordon, who was dispatched on a mission essentially pacific, has found himself, from whatever cause, unable to prosecute it effectually, and has now proposed the use of military means which may fail and which if they succeed may be found to mean a new subjugation of the Soudan, the very consummation which it was the object of Gordon's mission to avert." That was unchallengeable too. But such distinctions were beyond the Queen (and an increasing number of her subjects), who merely saw a lonely hero in a beleaguered city. Her tone rose, as the weeks went by; and a discussion with the French in May upon the limits to be set to the British occupation of Egypt did nothing to improve her opinion of the Government. Once more her ministers seemed far too ready to make concessions to foreign insolence. That was the worst of Mr. Gladstone; and

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1054 an indignant sovereign pointed his duty with familiar emphasis.

The summer passed, and Khartoum had very largely ceased to be an object of anxiety, though consultations were inaugurated with the military authorities on the subject of the route to be followed by a relief expedition, should one be required. But the matter was not pressing, since the Cabinet in June saw "no fresh reason to anticipate the necessity of an expedition for the relief of General Gordon." Not that it could have started, since the military disagreed about its route. Always prone to demand swift decisions from civilian ministers, the soldiers were far more deliberate in taking decisions for which they would themselves be responsible. There were at least three ways of getting to Khartoum; each had its advocates; and all that summer 'the battle of the routes' was fought with departmental gusto. But after midsummer a graver problem faced the Government, when the House of Lords threw out the Franchise Bill. The Queen was quick to note the danger of a conflict between the Houses and deplored "the strong language used by the Prime Minister." Gladstone, with circumstantial gratitude, acknowledged the royal letter, "in which Your Majesty has, with a condescending frankness, expressed regret at strong language, presumed to have been used by him," and retorted blandly that the Tories had begun it. She was inclined to think the House of Lords should be permitted to force a General Election, but agreed that there should be an autumn session, provided ministers took care not to make irritating speeches in the recess. The Queen argued stoutly that "the House of Lords . . . is believed to represent the true feeling of the Country," a sentiment which Mr. Gladstone noted grimly as being "rather in the nature of an argument for the abolition of the House of Commons: not that she means this but it is what her argument leads to. . . . There is no use in a controversy with her infallibility,



but perhaps, without bringing in the Cabinet, I ought respectfully to demur to the sentiment I have quoted and to state my conviction that the Monarchy ought not to be and need not to be mixed up in controversies such as that which now appears to be within the lines of probability." This line was faithfully adhered to ; and he was kept busy writing explanations of provocative speeches by his more impulsive followers. Before the House rose for the autumn, the military managed to make up their minds upon the route to Khartoum ; money was voted for an expedition ; and in August Lord Wolseley was appointed to command. In view of possible communications with the Tory leaders, the Queen had been provided with a note of the Government's position on the Franchise question ; and distinguished emissaries began to flit about between the country houses. Mr. Gladstone's progress through Scotland was less to her taste ; and though his own impression of his utterances was that they had " moved . . . upon the lines of brevity and commonplace," she was displeased by " his *constant* speeches at every station, without which the country *would not* be excited. . . . The Queen is *utterly* disgusted with his *stump* oratory—so unworthy of his position—almost under her very nose." But his attitude to the negotiations for a settlement upon the Franchise compelled her gratitude ; and Lord Granville was informed that the Prime Minister had made himself " particularly agreeable " at Balmoral.

The autumn passed in these pursuits, the tactful Ponsonby weaving a web of concord between the party leaders. Sometimes the Queen confessed that Mr. Gladstone seemed " over anxious for the susceptibilities of the Liberal party " ; and he was not always equal to the exacting task of restraining Mr. Chamberlain. But when it came to the negotiations, Lord Salisbury proved to be quite as difficult ; and Gladstone earned royal praise for his conciliatory tone. A settlement was reached at last ; the Queen breathed her relief ; there was a rain of com-

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- 1047 pliments all round ; and his sovereign hoped the Prime Minister would take a change of air. In the ensuing calm there was almost a shy resumption of their former harmony, Mr. Gladstone sending her a German article to read and the Queen reciprocating with congratulations on a family event. Indeed, his record of an audience that 138 winter recalled happier days, since he " sat an hour with the Queen, who is in exuberant good humour over the Franchise question, & has been very useful." But their harmony was threatened by a distant shadow. Two thousand miles away Lord Wolseley, feeling his way up the Nile, sat reading a tiny scrap in Gordon's handwriting: 139 " Kârtum all right." But was it ?

## 6

- In the first week of 1885 the Desert Column started on its dash from Korti ; and as it vanished into the hot distances of the Bayuda Desert, the Queen and Mr. Gladstone were corresponding calmly on the approaching 1154 marriage of Princess Beatrice and the succession to Sir Moscs Montefiore's baronetcy (her views on Jewish honours had grown more liberal in recent years). The 1156 Prime Minister was sleeping badly, and " the Queen hopes soon to hear that Mr. Gladstone is better. His absence now w<sup>ld</sup> be serious." A harassed British square beat off the Mahdists at Abu-Klea ; and the Queen was sending 1159 Mr. Gladstone a portrait of her handsome son-in-law. Lord Hartington's objections to her telegraphing congratulations direct to the army annoyed her slightly— 140 " The Queen *has* the *right* to telegraph congratulations and enquiries to *any* one, and won't stand dictation. She *won't* be a *machine*. But the Liberals always wish to make her *feel* THAT, and she *won't accept it*." Her next use of the telegraph was anything but mechanical, since news came in the first week of February that a battered steamer had forced its way under a heavy fire into sight of Gordon's headquarters and found no flag flying. For the tide had

closed over Khartoum ; and the Queen's grief was tragic. She telegraphed her agonised displeasure to three ministers without troubling to conceal her indignation from their subordinates in the decent obscurity of cipher. The step was scarcely inadvertent, since she recorded it in her Journal, noting that she had "telegraphed *en clair* to Mr. Gladstone, Lord Granville, and Lord Hartington." Her message to the Prime Minister was painfully explicit :—

"These news from Khartoum are frightful and to think that all this might have been prevented and many precious lives saved by earlier action is too fearful."

His reply was grave—an acknowledgment of "Your Majesty's Telegram *en clair*," a confession of his inability "to follow the conclusion which Your Majesty has been pleased thus to announce," a reminder that the soldiers had taken some time making up their minds which route to follow, and a mournful iteration that "our proper business was the protection of Egypt, that it was never in military danger from the Mahdi and that the more prudent course would have been to provide it with adequate frontier defences, and to assume no responsibility for the lands beyond the desert." But his private secretary made a sharp complaint to Ponsonby that the sovereign had subjected her ministers to public rebuke ; and when the tactful General did his best to explain the royal action, his mistress was displeased, and in his answer Ponsonby was reduced to explaining away his own explanation. The last word was with Mr. Gladstone, though, in a majestic note in which "he must concede that her Majesty is the best judge of what to say and how to say it."

In this unhappy mood they settled down to consideration of the next step in the Sudan. It made the Queen quite ill ; for she was darkly certain that "Mr. Gladstone and the Government *have*—the Queen *feels it dreadfully*—Gordon's

innocent, noble heroic blood on their consciences." Their  
 1166 correspondence was resumed, this time in cipher; and  
 Mr. Gladstone noted the change with solemn courtesy.  
 After the shock the Government's first impulse was to  
 145 give Wolseley his way and let him "smash the Mahdi."  
 The Queen was strong for further operations; and her  
 Imperial sense was gratified by offers of military aid from  
 Canada and Australia. But even when it was prepared for  
 146 action, the Government seemed to depress her—"It is  
 this hopeless way of going on which would make me hail  
 a change of Government. Otherwise if they *will* but be  
*firm, honest*, and *not* so miserably undecided and non-  
 supporting or believing those they employ—I don't care  
 if they remain in. But I have *no* confidence left. . . ."  
 In any case, they must be pressed to give Lord Wolseley  
 a freer hand in the Sudan; and she indulged in most  
 unusual confidences to the General's wife, informing Lady  
 147 Wolseley privately that her ministers were "*more incor-*  
*rigible* than ever" and that their military subordinate  
 would be well advised to "hold *strong* language to them,  
 and *even* THREATEN to resign if he does *not* receive strong  
 support and liberty of action. . . . I really think they  
*must be frightened.*"

Salvation appeared upon the troubled scene from a  
 most unexpected quarter. That spring the Russians made  
 a menacing move on the Afghan frontier; and in the  
 shadow of a graver war Gladstone was firm. The Queen  
 1197 was highly pleased, expressing "satisfaction . . . at this  
 firm & proper tone held by the Govt. to the Russian  
 Ambassador,—w<sup>h</sup> she cannot help hoping may have some  
 effect—as she thinks the Russians expected the Govt.  
 w<sup>ld</sup> swallow everything;—especially as—whether wrongly  
 or rightly it is believed that Mr. Gladstone's views lean  
 towards Russia." The House of Commons heard him  
 move a Vote for warlike preparations, and the deep voice  
 148 announced that "we only know that the attack was a  
 Russian attack. We know that the Afghans suffered 'n

life, in spirit, and in repute. We know that a blow was struck at the credit and the authority of a sovereign—our protected ally—who had committed no offence. All I say is, we cannot in that state of things close this book and say, 'We will look into it no more.' " Here was another Mr. Gladstone, whom the Queen at her most bellicose could almost applaud. The Russian Government was warned in time; a settlement was reached; and as the dust settled, it was found that orders for a forward policy in the Sudan had been withdrawn. For it would plainly have been unreasonable to engulf a British army in the depths of Africa with an immediate prospect of war in Europe and Asia. The Queen acquiesced regretfully; and that book, at least, was closed.

Another opened, as the Cabinet essayed the formulation of a policy for Ireland. Mr. Gladstone's colleagues were not all of the same mind; and the Queen enquired eagerly for news of their various opinions. The Prime Minister's reply verged on the encyclopædic, as he unfolded the rich complications of the Irish Question and the various shades of opinion represented in his Cabinet; it would fall, he thought, to be decided in a distant future when Lord Hartington sat in his place as a minister of the Prince of Wales. But one summer night, before these deliberations could take effect, the Irish members voted with the Opposition against the Budget; the Government was defeated; and Lord Randolph Churchill leapt on a bench to wave his handkerchief and lead the Tory view-halloo. There was an interval of telegraphing between Downing Street and Balmoral; ministers resigned; the Queen was half inclined to bring Mr. Gladstone up to Scotland (a summons parried by his plea of business and the further complication of "proceeding to evacuate rapidly this house after five years without having any other ready to receive me"); her own departure for the South could hardly be accelerated, as the railway authorities considered it unsafe for her to

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leave without several days' notice, and she was feeling far from well—"the Queen is a Lady—nearer 70 than 60"; besides, she never liked to be at Windsor during Ascot week. But Lord Salisbury was finally installed in office, although there was some difficulty about the terms for the conduct of Parliamentary business which he wished to impose upon the Liberals.

1250 So Mr. Gladstone's reign was over; and the Queen bowed him out in style, offering an Earldom "as a *mark* of her *recognition* of his long, & distinguished Services as she believes & *thinks* he will thereby be enabled still to render great service to his Sovereign & Country." She even pressed him to postpone his retirement from public life and to be careful of his health. This was really going very far; and she was quite conscious of her own generosity, since her diary recorded that she had written  
 149 "in very civil terms." He was profoundly touched,  
 150 informing Granville that the Queen's letter "moves and almost upsets me. It must have cost her much to write, and it is really a pearl of great price." In his reply he bowed his very deepest:

1251 "It would not be easy for him to describe the feelings with which he has read Your Majesty's generous, most generous letter.

"He prizes every word of it, for he is fully alive to all the circumstances which give it value.

"It will be a precious possession to him, and to his children after him. All, that could recommend an Earldom to him, it already has given him . . ."

But he would not take the Earldom. His gratitude was genuine enough; and it was heightened by his knowledge of the distaste which she had overcome before making such an offer in such terms. The final audience was  
 161 uneventful; he noted half an hour of "kindly conversation," while she found him "very much excited, but . . . very amiable"; and at midsummer, 1885, they ~~formed~~

### III

#### ANTIPATHY

THE tragedy of Queen Victoria's relations with Mr. Gladstone was a tragedy of growth. Time and growth altered both of them. For with the passage of the years Mr. Gladstone underwent considerable changes ; and it was no less evident that time (and Disraeli) changed the Queen. Such changes are inevitable, and they might both have aged together without uncomfortable consequences. But unhappily the processes of growth took them in opposite directions, and they grew away from one another. As the years went by, Gladstone moved steadily towards the Left in politics, while by a sad mischance his sovereign inclined towards the Right. Worse still, Gladstone did not stop growing. For while the Queen retained for life the fixed impression of Disraeli's teaching, Mr. Gladstone continued to grow visibly more Radical. This obstinate development widened the gulf between them ; and it resulted that the Queen, with her mind firmly set in the safe principles of Disraelian Conservatism, surveyed his popular vagaries with deepening and elderly disapproval. True, she was ten years his junior ; but Mr. Gladstone was still growing. He could still change his mind ; and it was the paradox of his long career that, as the years passed, he steadily grew younger than his juniors. He was already younger than the Queen, enthroned for life among the past glories of 1878 ; he was far younger than the antique Whiggishness of Hartington ; his search for a democratic settlement in Ireland would soon leave Chamberlain behind, shocked into middle-aged resistance ; and as his mind reached forward towards international peace, he would  
5 the rail

stand out in the last phase of all younger, far younger than the gilded youth of Rosebery himself. That was the tragedy of the Liberal Epigoni. It was proclaimed in 1885 that Chamberlain, the paladin of Social Reform, was the man of the next generation; but was not Gladstone, who resigned upon Disarmament in 1894, the man of the next generation but one—and less acceptable than ever to the Queen?

## I

- There was a mild exchange of courtesies whilst he remained in Opposition. His throat was giving trouble; and when he asked permission to decline an invitation to Osborne on the ground that he had been forbidden to talk and would appear, as he put it picturesquely, "as a statue among living people," the simile amused the Queen; for what could be less like a statue than her late Prime Minister? But she still did her best for his political education, urging him to disavow extreme opinions and affirm "that *liberalism* is *not Socialism* & that *progress* does *not* mean *Revolution*." Revolution, in this instance, meant Mr. Chamberlain; and in his answer Mr. Gladstone reassured her with the intelligence that Mr. Chamberlain had been to stay with him at Hawarden and that Liberals were likely to be kept busy for some time to come with moderate reforms, although the distant future seemed less certain.

But his mind was busy with a more immediate problem. For Lord Salisbury, in spite of subterranean activities, made little progress with the Irish problem beyond exciting hopes that induced Irish electors to vote Conservative in the General Election of 1885. The result of these manoeuvres was a Parliament in which Conservatives were outnumbered by Liberals, but the Irish members held the balance; and as the year went out, Mr. Gladstone was at Hawarden, deep in the congenial task of thinking out the Irish Question. His duty, as he informed



a correspondent, was "to think, and think, and think"; and the Queen waited with profound misgivings for the result of his reflections. The Conservatives were plainly beaten; but she was not prepared to face another Liberal Government—"Things must and can not return to what they were, for it would be UTTER ruin to the country and Europe"—so there must be a coalition of Whigs and Tories to keep out the Radicals. And how was she to deal with Mr. Gladstone? Lord Salisbury sent her consoling messages to the effect that Gladstone would be far less formidable without his old majority, and that she would be able to object to the appointment of undesirable ministers, and that a threat to dissolve Parliament would always bring him to heel. But these consolations were unavailing. The royal heart was set upon a coalition to keep Mr. Gladstone out of office; and Ponsonby was sent to sound Mr. Goschen on the possibility of Whig defections from the Liberals. The Queen was frank, writing to Goschen with a strong appeal "to all moderate, loyal, and *really patriotic* men, who have the safety and well-being of the Empire and the Throne at heart," to save them from "the reckless hands of Mr. Gladstone . . . who can persuade himself that *everything* he takes up is right, even though it be calling black, white, and wrong, right." This remarkable communication was sent to Mrs. Goschen for the benefit of her cautious husband by the safe hands of a Court lady, who wrote at the same time begging another Liberal to resist "the wild plans of Mr. G." and not to "join in trying to drive out the present Government to let ~~Mr. G.~~ come in again." The royal anxiety grew more outspoken than ever at the intelligence that "Mr. Gladstone (in his 77<sup>th</sup> year) is bent on forcing himself into office. Such a wanton act should meet with no support . . ."

A gracious note to Mrs. Gladstone in the first week of 1886 hoped against hope that he would take a rest, which he so often spoke of as his *great* wish and which is

essential at his time of life." Meanwhile the anxious  
 100 sovereign did her best to whip up the Whigs—"Why can  
 you, moderate, loyal and patriotic Whigs, not join and  
 declare you will not follow Mr. Gladstone, and not sup-  
 port him? He will ruin the country if he can." But even  
 with this august supporter Lord Salisbury could hardly  
 stay in office without a Parliamentary majority. The  
 Government resigned; the Whigs had failed her; and  
 the Queen was left once more with the unpleasant  
 101 prospect of Mr. Gladstone. Her first message to him  
 intimated broadly that, if he preferred to retire from  
 public life, the Queen would not stand in his way. But  
 while Mr. Gladstone was "very grateful for Your Majesty's  
 gracious consideration for his declining years," he felt  
 constrained by the Irish situation to accept office once  
 102 again, although, as his diary recorded, "for a brief  
 tenure only." As to his colleagues, Dilke's tragedy re-  
 moved one royal difficulty; and he submitted sadly to  
 her ban on Granville as Foreign Secretary. A royal note  
 103 recorded mournfully that "Mr. Gladstone had 'accepted'  
 (alas!)" and he was Prime Minister once more in  
 January, 1886.

## 2

The veteran set briskly about forming his third  
 Government. He came to Osborne, and the Queen found  
 104 him looking "very pale" and "less Radical himself than  
 he used to be, and as intensely in earnest, almost fanatic-  
 ally so, in his belief that he is almost sacrificing himself  
 for Ireland." There was a good deal of talk upon the Irish  
 Question; and afterwards she reported it "in strict  
 confidence" to Lord Salisbury. There were few difficulties  
 about the composition of his new Cabinet, since the Prime  
 105 Minister "wished to please your Majesty to the best of his  
 power" and seemed unusually obliging, while the Queen  
 1277 did her best not to impede "his *very difficult* task."  
 With an early prospect of graver disagreements this

calm was slightly ominous ; and she began to press for details of his Irish projects. Meanwhile, he made a most disturbing speech about the House of Lords, which his sovereign read " with *deep & unfeigned regret.*" This reproof was gravely answered with a full statement of the case and a sardonic offer, " if Your Majesty shall be pleased to point out anything favourable to the House of Lords which he could usefully have said," to say it. The royal answer indicated the neglected virtues of the Upper House ; and the Prime Minister replied without enthusiasm that " Your Majesty's argument might doubtless have been used with great force from the Opposition Bench " ; nor was his temper improved by the subsequent discovery that, when the Queen made her first complaint, she had not read the full text of his speech.

The outline of his Irish policy was finally disclosed ; it moved Mr. Chamberlain to resignation ; and the Queen commented bleakly on " a measure which does not appear to command the approval of the Majority of her subjects in the United Kingdom." An audience that month impressed him as " an indication of a coming storm " ; and his personal relations with the sovereign were shadowed by their political divergence. For when he pleaded that pressure of work prevented him from obeying a command to dine and sleep at Windsor, the Prime Minister was coldly informed that " Her Majesty is very sorry because Wednesday is the only day on which Her Majesty could receive you at present." Mrs. Gladstone intervened with a touching " appeal to your Majesty's kindness. My husband's throat, I grieve to say, requires so much rest, that I had arranged to take him a few miles from London where he would have perfect quiet. The extraordinary effort upon the 8th being so great, Sir Andrew Clark has enforced the utmost quiet and watching on my part, with all the special care a wife can give to contrive absence of talking and the rest." The

Queen melted ; and a statesman of seventy-six was graciously permitted to reserve his strength from Windsor Castle and the rigours of an English spring in order to be equal to the introduction of a Home Rule Bill.

The great day came ; and in the words of his Chief Secretary, " few are the heroic moments in our parliamentary politics, but this was one." The crowds thronged Palace-Yard ; the Prime Minister spoke incomparably for three hours and a half, in which the forty sections of his Bill were lucidly expounded. The Queen, however, reserved her praises for his critics ; for she was busy pressing Hartington to prefer patriotism to party—or, at least, to the Liberal Party. But the Whigs lacked her fire ; and she was soon writing to Goschen that " it is [a] sad, and I cannot help saying *not* creditable or pleasant fact that the Liberals do *not* wish to *unite* with the Conservatives at such a *supreme* moment of danger to the best interests of my great Empire. However, we must *not* mind this narrow party view (which is, moreover, *not* shared by the Conservatives !), and organise the opposition to these dangerous Bills separately, and then act together." The Queen warned Gladstone frankly that she could not give him the full support that she would have wished (with a generous admission that the Prime Minister believed himself to be acting for the best) ; and he acknowledged her " desire to give an unvarying constitutional support to those who may have the honour to be Your Majesty's advisers," though this possibly did not include the conduct of a lively correspondence with the Opposition. As the Bill went forward, they argued strenuously with some loss of mutual esteem. The Queen, perhaps, had not much to lose ; but Mr. Gladstone's private note on one royal missive—" I shall take no notice of this rather foolish letter "—marks the sad decline in his respect. It might have suffered even more, had he known that the sovereign was in active consultation with the Leader of the Opposition as to

"whether, if Mr. Gladstone, on the defeat of his Bill, wishes to dissolve, it is desirable that he should be permitted to do so ; or whether it is better that Lord Hartington should be sent for." Lord Salisbury weighed up the chances and advised the Queen to act on her Prime Minister's advice, if he advised a General Election, adding the comforting opinion that "the Unionists will gain on a dissolution." Accordingly her Private Secretary was authorised to inform Mr. Gladstone that he might have a dissolution if he wanted one.

The Bill was lost in the House of Commons ; Parliament dissolved ; there was a General Election ; and the Home Rulers were defeated. During the elections there were a few exchanges on the current controversy between the Queen and Mr. Gladstone. Both correspondents remained unconvinced ; but further discussion was superfluous, as the Government resigned. She favoured him with advice upon his future conduct, suggesting that it would be as well if he abstained from public speeches which might encourage violence ; and once again they parted, his Journal noting that "to me personally it is a great relief, including in this sensation my painful relations with the Queen, who will have a like feeling."

## 3

After 1886 the Queen's opinion of Mr. Gladstone was beyond repair. In 1880 she had merely distrusted him as the successful critic of Lord Beaconsfield's foreign policy ; the intervening years swelled her misgivings with a deep suspicion of his growing Radicalism ; but now he was the open champion of Home Rule for Ireland, of a policy aimed (as it seemed to its opponents) at the integrity of the Empire—her Empire.

With such opinions there could be no compromise ; and the Queen gave full rein to her feelings, writing to Lord Lansdowne in Canada that "it is dreadful to see a

man who was three times Prime Minister fall so low ! ”  
1338 That was in 1887. A week or so before she had received  
the veteran's dutiful congratulations upon her Jubilee.  
In the next year he seriously considered refusing an  
invitation to Windsor ; but the ever-tactful Granville  
178 pressed him to avoid needless trouble. Even formalities  
presented difficulties now, the Queen withholding leave  
1343 for a small Cabinet disclosure until it was too late to be  
of any use to him. But he could still defend the Civil List  
179 with his accustomed soundness ; the Queen could still  
180 find means to be gracious to him at Marlborough House ;  
and in 1889 his Golden Wedding was honoured with a  
1345 royal message, although his loyal invitation to Hawarden  
was declined, the royal time being fully occupied with a  
visit to Sir Theodore Martin at Llangollen.

The years went by. Under a Conservative Government  
the Irish Question unfolded its unpleasing length ; *The  
Times* assisted patriotic feeling by the publication of  
seditious forgeries attributed to Mr. Parnell, who received  
a grudging and belated vindication ; a furtive taste for  
romance sent him the mournful way of Dilke, and the  
Irish Party dissolved in savage faction-fighting. But the  
grim problem still persisted ; and in its shadow, as Lord  
Salisbury presided imperturbably over a succession of  
Chief Secretaries, the ' Grand Old Man ' grew older, and,  
if anything, a trifle grander than before. But even  
Conservative Governments cannot last for ever ; there  
would have to be a General Election before the end of  
1892 ; and when it came, the Queen's diary recorded her  
181 sincere opinion that “ should these wretched Home  
Rulers come in, it is to be hoped they will not last long.”  
At first, indeed, she hoped it might be possible to avoid  
188 another spell of Mr. Gladstone—“ the G.O.M. at eighty-  
two is a very *alarming look-out* ”—but she was finally  
persuaded that it would be hopeless for her to send for  
Lord Rosebery or Sir William Harcourt or any of his  
other followers over his head. Lord Salisbury vilified him

to the Queen in the best Disraelian tradition, and she responded to the treatment, noting that " Mr. Gladstone has brought so much personal violence into the contest, and used such insolent language that the Queen is quite shocked and ashamed." But he fought on indomitably, "waging a daily and hourly battle against Nature with no sort of personal assurance as to my capacity to sustain it," and the old hero won.

The mounting tide of Liberals horrified the Queen, and she poured out her feelings to Lord Lansdowne :

" By an incomprehensible, reckless vote, the result of most unfair and abominable misrepresentations at the elections, one of the best and most useful Governments have been defeated. . . . The Queen-Empress can hardly trust herself to say what she feels and thinks on the subject. Apart from the pain of parting from some great personal friends and people whom she can trust and rely on, the danger to the country, to Europe, to her vast Empire, which is involved in having all these great interests entrusted to the shaking hand of an old, wild, and incomprehensible man of 82½, is very great ! It is a terrible trial, but, thank God, the country is sound, and it cannot last."

This was, to say the least, unpromising.

But she resigned herself to send for Mr. Gladstone, a pointed note informing him that she had accepted Lord Salisbury's resignation " with much regret " and that she trusted " Mr. Gladstone and his friends will continue to maintain & promote the honour and welfare of her great Empire." He replied with some restraint that such would be their endeavour, " although he is of course sensible of the fallibility of his and their judgments, and can claim for them no other authority than that of sincere and tried convictions." The Queen was frankly hostile, writing to the Prince of Wales about " this iniquitous Government." The new Prime Minister im-

187 pressed her at his first audience as greatly aged, "his face shrunk, deadly pale with a weird look in the eyes, a feeble expression about the mouth, and the voice altered . . . It is rather trying and anxious work to have to take as Prime Minister a man of eighty-two and a half, who really seems no longer quite fitted to be at the head of a Government, and whose views and principles are somewhat dangerous." His own impression of the interview was less cruel, but not more promising, since he 188 found the Queen "cautiously polite, in nothing helpful. Not however captious, perfect in temper, not one sympathetic word or any question however detached. After dinner a little unfrozen." The veteran retained, it seemed, his faculty of observation.

But no proof of his unflagging powers, no exhibition of tact could overcome her prejudice. The Prince and Princess of Wales were invariably gracious to him; but the Queen remained quite unapproachable behind the battlements of her unchanging disapproval. His exclusion of the scurrilous 1358 Labouchere gave satisfaction; her courtesy enquired 1362 after his health, when he was charged and trampled by a cow at Hawarden (and was wholly unimpaired by the unpleasant adventure); her interest was politely roused by his memories of Tennyson, when the Laureate died 1373 and Mr. Gladstone sent some of Arthur Hallam's letters for the Queen to read; she even marvelled at his energy, 1377 when he went off to Oxford and gave a lecture. But she found his views as uncongenial as ever. They still differed vigorously over Ireland; and when they met, the conversation turned upon trivialities. After one audience that year the Prime Minister made a melancholy note of the topics :—

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- " 1. Inquiry for the Queen's health.  
 2. The fogs of London & Windsor.  
 3. The Laureateship. W. Watson.  
 4. The Dowager Duchess of Sutherland . . .



5. The Roumanian Marriage . . .
6. Lord Acton : not yet personally known to the Queen.
7. Condition of Lady Kimberley.
8. Has Mrs. Gladstone still a nephew who is a master at Eton ?
9. Dean Wellesley . . .
10. The Dean of Peterborough.
11. Health of the Bp. of Rochester.
12. Agricultural distress (H.M. seemed half inclined to lay it upon ' large importations ').
13. Commission thereupon (not desired).

" These are all or nearly all the topics of conversation introduced at the audience to-night. From them may be gathered in some degree the terms of confidence between H.M. and her Prime Minister. Not perhaps with perfect exactitude, as she instinctively avoids points of possible difference. But then it seems that such are now all points."

Small wonder that his record of an audience in the next year was : " A form as usual, indeed I fear a sham."

There was to be another Home Rule Bill in 1893 ; and the Queen, true to her principles, stoutly refused to let it be described as a measure " for the better government of Ireland." The indomitable old man introduced it " in a lengthened speech to a very considerable House " ; and the royal diary noted some failure in his voice towards the end of the second hour, though " Bertie was present, and telegraphed that the speech was impressive." But she liked the Unionist speeches best and made no effort to conceal her views from the Prime Minister, who expressed " his thankfulness to Your Majesty for the very frank expression of Your Majesty's apprehensions as to the tendencies of the Irish Government Bill." Tory ladies sent her accounts of Ulster demonstrations ;

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Unionist gentlemen were ready with their guidance, when she seemed dangerously inclined to insist upon a dissolution, if the House of Lords threw out the Bill. But she was still afflicted with uncongenial ministers ; and she did her best to show them where their duty lay. There was  
 1434 the question of naval armaments ; and the Queen insisted upon ample preparation for the inevitable war with France and Russia. It was quite unpardonable of  
 1438 Mr. Gladstone not to accept the Opposition's sound opinions ; and she would have been more deeply shocked if she had known that he was even less favourable to unnecessary armaments than any of his colleagues. He  
 1441 could still do his duty, though, upon the question of a royal allowance ; but he was most disobliging about an  
 1451 honour for Lord Lansdowne on his return from India ; and when he went off to Biarritz in January, 1894, the Queen still felt herself oppressed by her indefatigable Prime Minister of eighty-four.

That winter, though, the burden began to weigh him down. He had come almost unscathed through sixteen months of highly controversial Cabinets, some of which  
 194 were aptly diagnosed by somebody as " heated and very Harcourty " and occasionally sent the more fragile Morley reeling into the ante-room with a gasp of " Very rough, very rough." His Parliamentary performances on the Home Rule Bill had been a miracle of sustained dexterity and eloquence ; night after night the old swordsman was in his place, full of debating ingenuity, broad reasoning, and even banter. But disagreement with his colleagues upon the naval estimates began to wear him down. He felt his weaknesses—the growing dimness of his eyes and the increasing faintness of the sounds about him—more than he used to ; and he dismissed  
 196 1893 with the apostrophe : " Farewell old year. Will there be another ? "

1459 He returned from France in February to find his colleagues more set on naval armaments than ever and,

worse still, "that my sight has gone one stage backward." That fatal combination decided him to take the final plunge, and he went off to Windsor for a talk with Ponsonby. His first consideration was the Queen's convenience: should he resign at once? All things considered, it was felt to be most suitable that he should see her for the purpose. His intention to resign was put in writing, and one February day he came to Windsor for an audience. They talked about the weather and her plans for an Italian holiday. "She was at the highest point of her cheerfulness. Her manner was personally kind throughout. She asked about my wife, and about the Rector . . . To me she said she was sorry *for the cause* which brought about my resignation." The official wheels went round, and Mr. Gladstone sat in Cabinet for the last time. It moved him, though his face was set like marble; it moved the others too; and his voice scarcely rose above a whisper for the last "God bless you all." But his farewell at Windsor was less emotional. At first he thought the Queen was going to break down; but that might only have been his failing eyesight. At any rate, she retained full control of her emotions; and the conversation was as insignificant as ever—the merits of rival oculists, royal thanks for his services about the Duke of Coburg's grant, a gracious word on Mrs. Gladstone, and not a single syllable about the past, about the close of a fourth Premiership and of sixty years in English public life.

That was the end. A brief note wished him continued "peace & quiet with his excellent & devoted wife in health & happiness" and an improvement of his sight. But, as he noted sadly later, "it was the kind and generous farewell from Ponsonby which had to fill for me the place of a farewell from my Sovereign." Her mood, indeed, was livelier, since she gaily informed the Archbishop of Canterbury that "Mr. Gladstone has gone out, disappeared all in a moment. His last two ministries have been failures. Indeed," she added 'with a most amusing

little laugh,' "his last three. Mr. Gladstone takes up one or two things—and then nothing else interests him. He cares nothing for foreign affairs, which are always essential to England. Knows nothing of foreign affairs—exceedingly distrusted on the Continent. They have thought he might abandon Egypt any moment. He will not attend to any suggestions but his own mind's. He does not care what you say, does not even attend. I have told him two or three *facts* of which he was quite ignorant, on foreign tone and temper. It makes no difference. He only says 'Is that so? Really?' " For an impenetrable curtain had dropped between them.

His own diagnosis was more rueful :

"The force of a resemblance really compels me to put a word on paper, which I had not intended, which will stand alone, and will never pass the door of my lips on its passage to the ear of any human being.

"In the autumn of 1838 I made the *gita* of Sicily from Palermo by Girgenti and Syracuse or Messina in two or three weeks, riding on the back of a mule. The beast was wholly inaccessible to notes of kindness by voice or hand, and was disposed to lag so that our muleteer, Michele, used to call out 'Pugna, Signor, Pugna!'—an unwelcome process of only momentary effect. But we rode usually with little interval from 6 a.m. to 4 p.m., and its undemonstrative unsympathetic service was not inefficiently performed. In due time we arrived at Messina to take our departure from the Island. There my mule and I of necessity parted company.

"But I well remember having at the time a mental experience which was not wholly unlike a turn of indigestion. I had been on the back of the beast for many scores of hours, it had done me no wrong; it had rendered me much valuable service, but it was in vain to argue; there was the fact staring me in the

face. I could not get up the smallest shred of feeling for the brute, I could neither love nor like it.

"A rule of three sum is all that is necessary to conclude with. What that Sicilian mule was to me, I have been to the Queen; and the fortnight or three weeks are represented by 52 or 53 years."

That was his mournful apologue. It grieved him "to be troublesome to any one, especially among women to a Queen, and to an old and much respected Queen. I am very sorry for it; and I should be much more sorry still, but I cannot suspect that I had either by wilfulness or by neglect caused aggravations of the mischief." Yet one circumstance in her farewell compelled his gratitude. He confessed that "taking relations to me since 1844, as a whole, there is in them something of mystery, which I have not been able to fathom, and probably never shall. I hope my duty to H.M. and her family has never in fact, as it has never in intention, fallen short. And I have a new cause of gratitude to H.M., in her having on this last occasion admitted my wife anew to a footing of confidence and freedom. She had too long, I think, been suffering on my behalf. I am glad that this chapter is well closed. God Save the Queen."

## 4

The epilogue was meagre. Before the year was out the Queen, relying on his invariable loyalty, asked him to support a royal grant in Parliament. But the old crusader's outbreak on the subject of Armenian atrocities elicited an angry comment in the old manner on "the impolitic half-mad attitude of Mr. Gladstone." Her condolences were ready when Archbishop Benson died suddenly in Hawarden Church one day in 1896. She received him after some manœuvring in the next year at Cannes. Each found the other changed, and he recorded that the royal manner was "decidedly kind, such as I had not seen it

for a good while before my final resignation ; and she gave me her hand . . . which had never happened with me during all my life." The talk was trivial, and after ten minutes they parted. It gratified him that she had shown kindness at their final meeting ; for they never met again. That year she had her Diamond Jubilee ; and a  
1480 Court functionary sent medals by command to Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone. When he was taken ill in 1898, she was most careful to enquire ; and when the long career was  
207 closed, her epitaph was almost gentle : " He was very clever and full of ideas for the bettering and advancement of the country, always most loyal to me personally, and ready to do anything for the Royal Family ; but alas ! I am sure involuntarily, he did at times a good deal of harm. He had a wonderful power of speaking and carrying the masses with him."

The Queen lived on for three years more ; and then the reign was over—her reign and, perhaps, his reign as well. For who can say which of its nobler features were Victorian and which Gladstonian ?

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*PRIME MINISTER, 1880-5*



626 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

LONDON, April 24, 1880.

Mr. Gladstone presents his humble duty to Your Majesty, and humbly states to Your Majesty the amount of progress he has made in the Commission so graciously entrusted to him last evening.

Mr. Gladstone has seen Sir Henry Ponsonby and has been able to give him assurances on the three points he was charged to mention, of such a nature as he trusts will be satisfactory to Your Majesty.

The arrangements now submitted in writing for Your Majesty's gracious approval, and including for greater convenience the cases noticed last night, more or less definitively by word of mouth, are as follows.

<i>Offices</i>	<i>Peers</i>	<i>Commoners</i>
First Lord of the Treasury	. . . . .	. Mr. Gladstone
Chancellor of the Exchequer		
Foreign Office	Lord Granville	
Indian Office	. . . . .	. Lord Hartington
Admiralty	Lord Northbrook	
Lord Chancellor	Lord Selborne	
War Office	. . . . .	. Mr. Childers
Irish Secretary	. . . . .	. Mr. Forster

In submitting these proposals Mr. Gladstone is largely governed by two considerations: the first his desire to secure, under difficult circumstances, for the Foreign Office and the Indian Office the highest statesmanship which is available, and, having done this, then secondly to secure the best administrator in the House of Commons for the management of the great and diversified machinery of the War Department. He has entirely satisfied himself that Mr. Childers<sup>1</sup> will approach the consideration of every

<sup>1</sup> First Lord of the Admiralty, 1868-71; Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, 1872-3.

question just as Your Majesty would he believes wish, without prejudice and with an open and considerate mind.

He would gladly have submitted the name of a commoner for the Admiralty also: but there the necessity is less, and the difficulty, after meeting the primary claim, would have been greater.

Mr. Gladstone humbly prays Your Majesty's approval of the names thus far submitted and will continue to use his utmost diligence in the prosecution of his task.

He has not failed to enjoin for the present a strict secrecy in each case.

627

*General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. *April 24, 1880.*

The Queen did not wish to delay answering your letter but being too tired after the marriage<sup>1</sup> to write herself has commanded me to make the following remarks.

The Queen could of course have no objection to make to Lord Selborne. But his constrained and peculiar manner fails to place her at ease with him and this checks that freedom of intercommunication which The Queen desires to maintain with the Lord Chancellor. Her Majesty had hoped from something you said that perhaps Lord Coleridge<sup>2</sup> or some other distinguished Lawyer might be selected. But although The Queen makes these observations she does not oppose Lord Selborne's selection if you consider it the best that could be made.

As regards Lord Northbrook<sup>3</sup> The Queen would prefer his being Secretary of State for War as Her Majesty believes he would suit that post better than Mr. Childers. But if you consider it necessary, after giving full weight to The Queen's observations, that the original arrangement should be adhered to, Her Majesty will acquiesce in the appointments of Lord Northbrook to the Admiralty and Mr. Childers to the War Department.

The Queen scarcely deems it necessary to allude to various rumors—but feels sure that you will agree with her that it would not be desirable to name as Under Secretaries at the War Office—either Mr. Hqlms, Mr. Baxter or Mr. G. Trevelyan. On the other

<sup>1</sup> Princess Frederica of Hanover was married to Baron von Powell-Rammingen at Windsor

<sup>2</sup> Lord Chief Justice.

<sup>3</sup> Governor-General of India, 1872-6.

hand Her Majesty believes that Mr. Campbell Bannerman or even Sir Henry Havelock would suit these offices. . . .

628 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

LONDON. *Ap. 25. 1880.*

. . . With regard to the Chancellorship, when Your Majesty referred on Friday to the name of Lord Selborne in conjunction with that office, Mr. Gladstone did not gather that there was anything on Your Majesty's mind which required explanation from him, or Mr. Gladstone would at once have stated that, while Lord Selborne's manner has something distinctive, his character is eminently the reverse of artificial, and there is not among all Your Majesty's subjects a more attached and loyal heart. Without any disparagement to Lord Coleridge, Mr. Gladstone believes, and humbly submits, that the appointment of Lord Selborne is that which would give the most general and the most just satisfaction both to the profession and to Parliament. . . .

629 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. *April 25. 1880.*

Sir Henry Ponsonby has conveyed the Queen's approval to Mr. Gladstone of the appointments of Mr. Childers & Lord Selborne.

The objection to Mr. Childers is that his app<sup>t</sup> may cause the dangerous belief that reductions are to be made which would have the very worst effect in Europe & especially so in India.

The Queen says, *merely* what may be *thought*—but Mr. Childers can easily dispel this by his own language & conduct. It is *most essential* that he sh<sup>ld</sup> act cordially & in a conciliatory spirit with the Commander in Chief.<sup>1</sup>

Who has Mr. Gladstone thought of submitting to the Queen for Lord President, & Privy Seal—and Sec<sup>ies</sup> of State for the Home & Colonial Departments?

630 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

LONDON. *April 26. 1880.*

Mr. Gladstone presents his humble duty to Your Majesty and has further to submit very humbly to Your Majesty his recommendation that the following appointments be made.

President of the Council	.	.	Earl Spencer
Lord Privy Seal	.	.	Duke of Argyll

<sup>1</sup> The Duke of Cambridge.



. . . Mr. Gladstone also humbly advises Your Majesty to appoint the Marquis of Ripon to be Viceroy of India. He judges this appointment to be at the present moment of an importance exceeding even that which attaches to the offices of many of Your Majesty's confidential servants strictly so-called. He has been extremely anxious in concert especially with Lord Hartington<sup>1</sup> that a thoroughly wise and safe selection should be made ; and he feels very confident in the recommendation which he now humbly tenders.

Necessary inquiries precede the acceptance of such an office, and Your Majesty will not be surprised that there has been some small delay, which has affected a portion of Mr. Gladstone's other proceedings.

631 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. *April 26. 1880.*

The Queen commands me to inform you that Her Majesty approves of the appointments you submit with the exception of Lord Ripon, and Lord Fife.

The Queen who likes Lord Ripon personally does not think him sufficiently strong willed or firm for India and would have preferred some one who has more determination and energy. The Queen however will consent to the appointment, if on consideration you still desire it.

As regards Lord Fife, he is much too young for the office of Lord Chamberlain, who has the very difficult task of meeting all the pressing demands made by English Society, and of maintaining a position which it requires a man of a certain age to fill. . . .

632 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. *April 27. 1880.*

I am commanded by The Queen to ask if you can let Her Majesty know why Mr. Goschen<sup>2</sup> is not included in your new Ministry.

633 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

*April 27. 1880.*

Mr. Gladstone submits his humble duty to Your Majesty and with reference to Your Majesty's remark on the appointment of

<sup>1</sup> Secretary for India.

<sup>2</sup> Subsequently sent on special mission to Constantinople

Mr. Childers and on his relation to the Commander-in-Chief, wishes to state to Your Majesty that, in consequence of what he had observed, it had been his intention, and is so still, to make sure that Mr. Childers is fully informed with all that is due to the high station of the Commander-in-Chief<sup>1</sup> as a Prince of the Blood, and he earnestly hopes that confidence may be fully exchanged between them.

Mr. Gladstone has not learned that the appointment of Mr. Childers has given rise to any of the alarm which is so justly deprecated by Your Majesty, and he believes that the discretion of Mr. Childers will be such as to obviate every just apprehension. Indeed the remark with which he began is not in any manner founded on a suspicion that it is necessary in the case of Mr. Childers.

With regard to Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Gladstone now submits his name for an appointment<sup>2</sup> which he is eminently qualified to fill with honor and advantage. Even had the prospect in this respect been less satisfactory, the position of Sir C. Dilke in the House of Commons has been so advanced by his conduct in quite recent years (subject perhaps to a single exception) that it would have been neither politic nor just to pass him by. Mr. Gladstone, however, has not been unmindful of some incidents of prior history, and on these, without troubling Your Majesty now at any great length, he will be quite prepared to make explanations to Your Majesty should they be deserved, when, as he hopes, he has the honor of an audience at Windsor tomorrow.

634 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

LONDON, *April 27. 1880.*

Mr. Gladstone . . . under the urgency of the case, fearing that some accident has occurred, humbly requests Your Majesty to understand that he is not yet in possession of Your Majesty's pleasure on the Cabinet appointments, except those submitted on Saturday and the Chancellorship of the Duchy<sup>3</sup>: nor on the Vice Royalty of India. Rumour is busy, and acts are founded upon rumour out of doors and Mr. Gladstone will humbly explain to Your Majesty tomorrow the special reasons of this intrusion.

<sup>1</sup> The Duke of Cambridge.

<sup>2</sup> Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs.

<sup>3</sup> Mr. John Bright.

635 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*LONDON. *Ap. 27. 1880.*

Mr. Gladstone with his humble duty assures Your Majesty that [but] for the extreme pressure of time (it being so necessary that a new Viceroy should go out, and impossible to keep his preparations secret) he would much have preferred waiting until he could have stated the case respecting Lord Ripon fully and at leisure to Your Majesty.

But considering the motives he has named, he will avail himself of Your Majesty's most gracious permission, and announce the appointment of Lord Ripon, only assuring Your Majesty that it has been the subject of careful and not sole, consideration.

636 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*WINDSOR CASTLE *April 27 1880.*

The Queen acknowledges Mr. Gladstone's 2 letters just recd. She does not wish to object—if she can, to any persons who he submits to her as Members of the Government but she regrets to see the names of such very advanced Radicals as Mr. Chamberlain<sup>1</sup> & Sir C. Dilke. It will alarm moderate Liberals as well as Conservatives & she cannot think will add to the harmony of the Cabinet. Before agreeing to either the Queen wd wish to feel sure that Mr. Chamberlain has never spoken disrespectfully of the Throne or expressed openly Republican principles. — The Queen must also ask, before she consents to Sir C. Dilke's appt to the office of Under Secy for Foreign Affairs that he shld give a written explanation, or make one in Parlt. on the subject of his very offensive Speeches on the Civil List & Royal family. . . .

637 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*LONDON. *April 27. 1880. Midnight.*

Mr. Gladstone presents his humble duty, and has had the honour to receive Your Majesty's gracious letter of this evening. He was unwilling to trouble Your Majesty at an unseasonable hour. And he thinks he will best suit Your Majesty's convenience by explaining verbally the points mentioned by Your Majesty

1. as to Lord Ripon

2. as to Mr. Goschen

<sup>1</sup> President of the Board of Trade

3. as to Mr. Chamberlain
4. as to Sir Charles Dilke, in respect to the two points
  - a. of his supposed republican opinions
  - b. of his course or language in debate on certain questions affecting Your Majesty or the Royal Family.

As to points 3 and 4 he will ask leave to say a word

- a. on his own motives in proposing these appointments
- b. on the state of opinion respecting them in the sections so to call them of the Liberal majority.

Mr. Gladstone feels a good deal of confidence that Your Majesty will deem his explanations to be satisfactory.

638 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 90.)

LONDON. 28th April 1880. Noon.

. . . Mr. Gladstone would gladly have kept the number of the Cabinet down to the point at which it was judiciously fixed<sup>1</sup> by Lord Beaconsfield on the formation of the late Government, but it has not been in his power. He has now submitted to your Majesty fourteen recommendations for the Cabinet, and has no intention of adding to the number.

639 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. April 29. 1880.

. . . With respect to the Peers—the Queen will *not* object to them as Mr. Gladstone is desirous for them, but she *does* object to a Viscounty for Mr. Lowe.<sup>2</sup> She will not recapitulate reasons agst this but she thinks a Peerage itself *ample* for him & that more than a Baron wd<sup>d</sup> be objectionable. . . .

The Queen hopes Mr. Gladstone will soon let her have the M<sup>m</sup> relative to Sir C. Dilke's assurances to himself, & Lord Granville wh<sup>h</sup> are of the g<sup>test</sup> importance.

640 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

LONDON. April 30. 1880. 7 a.m.

Mr. Gladstone, with his humble duty, thanks Your Majesty for the very prompt and gracious reply to his submissions of yesterday

<sup>1</sup> Twelve members.

<sup>2</sup> Chancellor of the Exchequer, 1868–73, Home Secretary, 1873–4.

but takes blame to himself for not having more clearly proposed a Viscountcy for Mr. Lowe. For undoubtedly the facts that in 1880 he enters his seventieth year, and that he is childless, whilst they reduce in a certain degree the magnitude of the question, do not at all constitute substantive reasons for such a measure.

In the first place, Mr. Lowe's mind, like his career, is peculiar, and has flaws which, occasionally becoming conspicuous for a moment, seem to bely its great powers and merits. He on one occasion fell into a strange *égarement* (Your Majesty will forgive the word, it is the most accurate) of language,<sup>1</sup> which however he subsequently redeemed by an apology of the largest description.

Mr. Lowe is the oldest servant of the Crown in the House of Commons (after Mr. Gladstone), but this point is not of primary weight. . . .

. . . Mr. Lowe has a happiness not accorded to many, for his name holds the *first* place in the authorship and establishment of two great administrative measures, which form part of the remarkable series of Your Majesty's reign ;

1. The organization of the scheme of National Education on the basis of results.\*
2. The substitution of merit, ascertained by examination and competition, for patronage in admission to the Civil Service of the Crown.

With regard to the highest point of eminence attained in the House of Commons, Mr. Gladstone humbly submits that in the year 1866 there was no person in the House of Commons who stood on the same level as Mr. Lowe, with the single exception of Lord Beaconsfield : and though he will not say that Mr. Lowe maintained that level throughout, he doubts if any of the distinguished persons, to whom reference has been made as preferred by Your Majesty, at any time quite reached it.

Mr. Lowe is not, in Mr. Gladstone's opinion, a violently ambitious man, and he might perhaps have received Mr. Gladstone's proposal to submit his name with pleasure or content had it been for a Barony only ; but Your Majesty would be the last person to desire that moderation in wishes should stint the fulness of reward. Reviewing in his mind the Parliamentary Baronies of late years, granted for civil service, Mr. Gladstone remembers none,

<sup>1</sup> In a debate on the Royal Titles Bill.

\* Education Act, 1870.

the holders of which could present such a case as that of Mr. Lowe which he blames himself, as he has already stated, for not having laid with greater fulness before Your Majesty, on the first presentation of the name.

641

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. 30 April. 1880.

The Queen has rec<sup>d</sup> Mr. Gladstone's letter in which he strongly urges the claims of Mr. Lowe for the higher honour in the Peerage.

She can scarcely agree with Mr. Gladstone's reasons for making this unusual distinction but will refrain from entering into a discussion. As the Queen is desirous to meet Mr. Gladstone's wishes—as he must have perceived in the manner in which she has hitherto waived all her objections to appointments which she could not regard with much satisfaction—she trusts that her readiness to do so may be reciprocated by him on other occasions.

642

*Mr. Gladstone to General Ponsonby*

10, DOWNING STREET, WHITEHALL. 10 May. 1880.

I am (at Mentmore) utterly void of paper for writing to Her Majesty, but I do not lose a moment in expressing my ready adoption of Her Majesty's suggestions<sup>1</sup> conveyed in your letter of Saturday which has reached me here.

643 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 99.)

10, DOWNING STREET, WHITEHALL. May 12. 1880.

. . . The Cabinet also agreed upon the terms of a telegram by which Lord Kimberley<sup>2</sup> will inform Sir Bartle Frere<sup>3</sup> that Your Majesty's Government will uphold the Sovereignty of the British Crown in the Transvaal but will be desirous to bestow upon it at the earliest period the gift of free institutions—

He is also instructed to promote Confederation, and to avoid measures tending to advancement of the Frontiers . . .

<sup>1</sup> The Queen had proposed, at the suggestion of the Prince of Wales, that Hon. W. Carington, M.P., should be appointed Groom-in-Waiting

<sup>2</sup> Colonial Secretary.

<sup>3</sup> Governor of the Cape and High Commissioner of South Africa.

644 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 100.)

10, DOWNING STREET. 15 May. 1880.

. . . The Cabinet authorised the Secretary of State for War<sup>1</sup> to consider plans and proceedings with a view to the eventual abolition of flogging in the Army, in conformity with the practice of the other European armies.

645 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. 15 May. 1880.

I am commanded by The Queen to observe with reference to the last paragraph of your letter of yesterday that in assimilating the mode of punishment in the English Army to that in force in other European Armies the difference in the conditions of service must be taken into consideration. Her Majesty is much opposed to the principle of corporal punishment in the Army, but she must remember that officers on Service have a very difficult task to perform in maintaining discipline among the young wild spirits who compose the bulk of our regiments.

And The Queen therefore hopes that if corporal punishment is to be abolished some other powers for keeping men in order will be granted to those who are responsible for the behaviour of the troops.

Cowardice, Treachery, Mutiny, Plundering, Drunkenness or Negligence on Sentry are most serious crimes and if on Service these are only to be punished by death, as in Continental Armies, which is abhorrent to our officers ; or to be left unnoticed, The Queen fears that the conduct of our Troops will deteriorate and that the Corps of very young men who are now with difficulty kept under control will when on Service dissolve themselves into unruly mobs.

646 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 100.)

WINDSOR CASTLE. 18 May. 1880.

Mr. Gladstone . . . assures Your Majesty that the utmost care will be taken to secure effective discipline in Your Majesty's

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Childers.

Army when the time for the contemplated change shall arrive, by arrangements previously well considered.

Even in the last House of Commons, the subject of corporal punishment in the Army was found difficult to deal with, and it is more than doubtful whether any efforts to maintain it could in the present House be successful.

Last year Lord Hartington made a proposal, in which Mr. Gladstone concurred, that flogging might be retained for those cases only in which actual sentence of death was pronounced by a Court Martial. This plan, which would have met, as it appears, Your Majesty's humane solicitude, was not accepted, and the Cabinet, who considered it yesterday, are of opinion that it would not now be hopefully received.

As Your Majesty was pleased to refer to the case of Mr. Bradlaugh, Mr. Gladstone humbly takes leave to mention that Mr. Bradlaugh has notified his intention to take the Oath of Allegiance.<sup>1</sup>

This intention will relieve the House from any question which might have been raised, as to passing a schedule for his admission.

647

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. *May 18. 1880.*

The Queen returns the Draft of the Speech w<sup>h</sup> she approves.— But she cannot but regret that the Peace Preservation Act is not to be renewed.

The Queen fears the state of Ireland is alarming from she has heard from the Duke of Marlborough & that the Govt may be compelled to have recourse to stronger measures.

With regard to Affghanistan—there must *be* no *appearance* of retreat till we have secured Peace.—

The Queen thinks that the Russians must be very closely watched—& that we can rely on *no* promises.—

Even if, (w<sup>h</sup> the Queen believes is the case) the Emperor *intends* to keep them—his Generals & agents utterly disregard them. . . .

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Bradlaugh, M.P. for Northampton, had originally desired to affirm in place of taking an oath on account of his absence of religious beliefs.



648 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

LONDON. May 21. 1880.

Mr. Gladstone . . . reports that the case of Mr. Bradlaugh has this day become the occasion of considerable difficulty, partly in consequence of a letter from him in the papers of this morning, in which he declared that the words of the Oath of Allegiance, which go beyond affirmation, are idle and meaningless words.

It appeared to Mr. Gladstone that, had the matter been one within the jurisdiction of the House of Commons, this declaration of Mr. Bradlaugh might have borne gravely upon it. But it also appeared upon inquiry that Parliamentary Oaths are statutory duties, that there was no precedent for offering any impediment to a member desirous to make an exact compliance with the Statute, and that the House might deviate from strict justice, and entangle itself in serious difficulty, if upon this occasion it offered such impediment.

Therefore, it was determined not to interfere on the part of Ministers with the Statutory compliance; but, in case such interference should be proposed from another quarter, then, as the proposal would involve a most serious and delicate question, to advise its reference to the consideration of a select Committee.

This recommendation was accordingly made by Mr. Gladstone: but Sir S. Northcote, who had supported the reference to a Committee on the first occasion of difficulty, tonight opposed it; and there was evidently much fear that the question might be regarded in debate as one on the demerits of atheism, rather than one of law and justice in the strictest sense. . . .

## 649

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

BALMORAL CASTLE. May 22. 1880.

The Queen has read with interest the discussion on . . . Mr. Bradlaugh & she cannot help rejoicing in the feeling of indignation exhibited ag<sup>st</sup> such a man's sitting in the House. It is not of his known atheism but it is his other horrible principles wh<sup>ch</sup> make him a disgrace to an assembly like the House of Commons.

She is anxious to hear what is the result of the Debate & what has been done.

650 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

LONDON. May 24. 1880.

(May 25. 1 30 a.m.)

Mr. Gladstone presents his humble duty to Your Majesty and humbly reports to Your Majesty that the House of Commons has further spent this evening in discussing the motion to exclude Mr. Bradlaugh from taking his oath. The contention on the Liberal side is that the question is judicial, and can only be discussed with profit before a select Committee, inasmuch as, in the debates of the House on such a subject, passion is sure to sway the judgment. On the other side, the odiousness of atheism is exhibited, and of the other opinions which Mr. Bradlaugh combines with atheism. The whole debate however keeps warm, even, for the most part, on the side of those who argue that the question should be judicially handled, and who to a certain extent exemplify in their own persons the impropriety of debating at length such matters in the House, when they cannot be dispassionately considered. The feeling which thus turns discussion off its proper guard is one entitled in itself, to respect: but Your Majesty will know how many cases there are in which even honourable feelings cannot be accepted as the right guide of conduct. . . .

651 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 103.)

BALMORAL. 24th May. 1880.

I am commanded by the Queen to express a hope that in any action that may be taken with reference to the case of Mr. Bradlaugh, care will be taken to prevent its being supposed (erroneously of course) that the Government sympathise with the opinions Mr. Bradlaugh is stated to hold.

652 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 103.)

LONDON, 25th-26th May. 1880.

. . . The reproach of desiring to force Mr. Bradlaugh on the House was cast upon the Government last night by one or two Members in the heat of debate, but it is not seriously believed, the fact being that it is only with difficulty, and for fear of dispa-

ment to justice, that Mr. Gladstone, and probably others with him, have been kept from making known in debate the loathing with which they regard certain opinions of Mr. Biallaugh. . . .

653 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

BALMORAL. 28th May. 1880.

I hope you will be firm about Sir B. Frere.<sup>1</sup>

654 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Life of Gladstone*, III, 23.)

LONDON. 28 May. 1880.

Mr. Gladstone has had the honor to receive Your Majesty's telegram respecting Sir B. Frere.

Mr. Gladstone used on Tuesday his best efforts to avert a movement for his dismissal, which it was intended by a powerful body of members on the Liberal side to promote by a memorial to Mr. Gladstone and by a motion in the House. He hopes that he has in some degree succeeded, and he understands that it is to be decided on Monday, whether they will at present desist or persevere.

Of course no sign will be given by Your Majesty's advisers which could tend to promote perseverance. At the same time Mr. Gladstone does not conceal from himself two things : the first that the only chance of Sir B. Frere's remaining seems to depend upon his ability to make progress in the matter of Confederation ; the second that if the agitation respecting him in the House, the Press and the country, should continue, confidence in him may be so paralysed as to render his situation intolerable to a high-minded man, and to weaken his hands fatally for any purpose of good.

655 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

BALMORAL CASTLE. May 28. 1880.

The Queen in thanking Mr. Gladstone for his reports—wishes to say that she is glad to see that he has held such firm language abt Sir B. Frere—for whom she *has* a g<sup>t</sup> admiration.—This recall w<sup>d</sup> be very disastrous. If he had committed faults with respect to the too sudden commencement of the War<sup>2</sup> (w<sup>h</sup> the Queen *doubts* as she *believes* it was *quite inevitable* & that he *saved* the Colony)—*that* is now over—and his g<sup>t</sup> knowledge of the Country, his g<sup>t</sup> courage,

<sup>1</sup> High Commissioner of South Africa.

<sup>2</sup> Zulu War.

combined with conciliatoriness & gr abilities make him far the fittest to carry out the policy of confederation.

Sir G. Wolsey<sup>1</sup> was . . . injudicious in his management of Affairs & is . . . wanting in tact. . . .

656 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

BALMORAL CASTLE. May 30. 1880.

The Queen thanks Mr. Gladstone sincerely for his congratulations for her birthday.

Affairs do *not* become quieter, as years go on—but the reverse : —& the life of a Constitutional Sovereign especially—of a formal one—with a very large family, is a hard & trying one !

The Queen has cyphered on the subject of Affghanistan—

Any *too* positive declaration one way or the other might become very serious.—

The Punjab is a striking instance of this !

657 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

BALMORAL. May 31. 1880.

With reference to concluding paragraph of your letter of the 29th—in making your statement respecting Afghanistan pray do not commit yourself to retrogressive steps—Remember Punjab where we reinstated the young sovereign, and afterwards annexed it.

658 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

BALMORAL. May 31. 1880.

The Queen has telegraphed to you on the subject of any statement you may make respecting Affghanistan.

Her Majesty says that on more than one occasion we have proclaimed our desire not to annex some district.

But have been soon afterwards compelled to annex it.

659 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

BALMORAL. May 31. 1880.

The Queen regrets to perceive by your letter that there is a feeling against the Secret Service Money.

Her Majesty thinks the Sum voted is by no means excessive and

<sup>1</sup> Sir Garnet Wolseley, after commanding in the later stages of the Zulu War of 1879, had administered Natal and the Transvaal.

cannot understand why the Government should not be entrusted with this very limited amount.

660

*Queen Victoria to Lord Granville*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 107-8.)

5th June. 1880.

The Queen cannot help feeling uneasy at the state of the House of Commons. There is such an amount of interference and meddling in everything, that, unless it is firmly resisted, Government will soon become impossible. It would be grievous indeed and *very serious* if this democratic tendency were *not checked*, and the Queen thinks Mr. Gladstone has it in his power, by his experience and influence as well as by his large majority, to raise the tone, and not let the House of Commons become, as it were, the executive power, which is what this constant interference and constant questioning *increasingly leads to*.

If Mr. Gladstone would refuse *shortly and firmly* to answer questions of a totally unfit character for Parliament, and would desire his colleagues to do the same, he would be doing immense good to the Monarchy and Constitution. A Constitutional Sovereign *at best* has a *most difficult task*, and it *may become almost an impossible one*, if things are allowed to go on as they have done of late years.

The Queen meant to mention this to Mr. Gladstone herself—as a *general rule*, and not with reference to any particular occasion—when she last saw him, but forgot it, and she thinks this *new* Parliament promises to be worse than any *in this respect*. It is the more necessary as so many new Office people like Mr. Chamberlain, Sir C. Dilke, Mr. Mundella,<sup>1</sup> and others, *themselves* very guilty of such proceedings, may *not be aware* of the *necessity* of checking such questions or of how to answer.

The Queen is much alarmed at the state of the House of Commons of late. . . .

661 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 108-10.)

LONDON. June 8. 1880.

Mr. Gladstone, with his humble duty, apprises Your Majesty that Lord Granville has transmitted to him a portion of a letter

<sup>1</sup> Vice-President of the Committee of Council for Education.

from Your Majesty relating to the condition of the House of Commons, and its tendency to assume the functions of the executive.

Mr. Gladstone is aware that his own observation is unequal to dealing conclusively with this important subject ; and, should it be Your Majesty's desire, he will at once enlarge and rectify it by reference to his colleagues in the Cabinet. In the meantime he humbly submits a statement of his own impressions, promising, however, that he does not include in his view the case of the " Irish Party," which is separate and in some points peculiar.

There seems to be no doubt that, within the last half century, there has been considerable invasion by the House of Commons of the province assigned by the constitution to the Executive.

Mr. Gladstone, however, does not perceive any increase of this tendency in recent times, or in the present House of Commons so far as the general functions of the Executive Government are concerned. Your Majesty may possibly have in view the pressure which has been exercised on the present Government in the case of Sir B. Frere. But—apart from the fact that this pressure represents a feeling which extends far beyond the walls of Parliament, Your Majesty may probably remember that, in the early part of 1835, the House of Commons addressed the Crown against the appointment of Lord Londonderry to be Ambassador at St. Petersburg, on account, if Mr. Gladstone remembers rightly, of a general antecedent disapproval. This was an exercise of power going far beyond what has happened now ; nor does it seem easy, in principle, to place the conduct of Sir B. Frere beyond that general right of challenge and censure, which is unquestionably within the function of Parliament and especially of the House of Commons.

Undoubtedly, in another branch of very great importance, there has grown up, within the last quarter of a century, a most urgent tendency in Parliament to invade the office of the Executive Government, which invests it with the sole initiative in the matter of public charge. This tendency has been manifest in all sections of political party, but it has beyond doubt, as Mr. Gladstone thinks, been specially observable in what is termed the landed interest, and in the officers of the Army. It has brought about a large increase of the public expenditure ; which, setting aside the public Debt, as matter of obligation and not of choice,

is more than double now what it was thirty years ago—large portions of the increase being undoubtedly legitimate or even necessary; but other positions representing the power of the interests of class, rather than the urgency of public wants. This tendency weakens the Government, and lowers greatly the sense of responsibility in the House of Commons. It may even, in course of time, grow to such a height as to raise the question whether the House must not be called upon to assume a larger portion in regard to the proposal of public charge than now nominally belongs to it, so that it may be seen and known to do what even now it really does, and that the Crown may not, through its ministers, be liable to the odium which, in certain states of affairs, and of the public mind, may attend upon taxation. But that time has not yet arrived. On the very evening, however, the first motion, by Earl Percy, aimed at disturbing anew the terms of the abolition of Purchase, to the prejudice of the nation; and the second by Mr. Leighton, at further lightening the liabilities of the ratepayer by a transfer of charge to the Exchequer, which certainly means, in a greater or less degree, casting upon Labour burdens hitherto borne by Property.

Whether this tendency is more powerful in the present House, than in others which have preceded it, Mr. Gladstone will not confidently say without further experience. Your Majesty may, however, rely upon this—that, whether in regard to public charge or to other duties of the executive, he is fully alive to the evils of encroachment by the House of Commons, and, so long as he has the honour to serve Your Majesty will steadily perform all that is in his power towards resisting it.

662

*General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

BALMORAL. June 9. 1880.

. . . The Queen was surprised to see the announcement of the abolition of flogging in the Navy. Perhaps a few words from the Admiralty would explain this to The Queen. . . .

663

*General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone**Private.*

BALMORAL. June 11. 1880.

The Queen showed me your letter on the House of Commons—and the Executive, a most interesting subject on which volumes could be written.

Her Majesty gave me no order to communicate to you and I think intends to do so herself. But it may be as well simply for your information requiring no response, to let you know what The Queen observed.

She said your remarks did not exactly meet the question she had raised—viz—the interference of the House of Commons in matters they had no right to refer to.

She quoted the discussion last year on her having received the news of a victory in India—and on her letter to Lady Frere (thanking for condolences on Princess Alice—but twisted into a political meaning).

The Queen thinks that no reply or a curt answer should be given to questions of this sort. I said no minister of any party could refuse to answer and curtness led to wrong inferences. I merely tell you this to show you what The Queen has in her mind.

664

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 113-15.)BALMORAL CASTLE. *June 11. 1880.*

The Queen thanks Mr. Gladstone for his full reports & for his 2 long letters—on his financial proposals—& in answer to her remarks to Lord Granville; w<sup>h</sup> she is the more thankful for, as she knows how much his time must be taken up. With respect to the 1<sup>st</sup> the Queen had meant to have made some remarks—but forgot—or rather did *not* know on which day they were to be brought forward.

She regrets the additional Income Tax as it presses heavily on people with small incomes—salaries &c & at this time will be a serious loss to the number of people whose rents have not been paid. The tax on beer she also regrets as the poor never drink wine, & the loss of beer will be deeply felt by them.

The richer classes who drink wine and who are not in any way restrained in their indulgences, can well afford to *pay* for wine.

But the poor can ill afford any additional tax on what in many parts is about their only beverage.

As regards Mr. Gladstone's answers to her remarks it is *not* so much with respect & to subjects like the recall of Sir B. Frere (tho' she *does* think the way in w<sup>h</sup> public Servants in difficult & distant posts, both Civil & Military, are attacked & abused at home when under most trying circumstances & in g<sup>t</sup> difficulties



is vy shameful, ungenerous & mischievous in its results) that she referred, but to the constant interference with private matters totally out of the province of Parlt.—For instance the Queen's letter to L<sup>d</sup> Frere wh was simply to thank her for expression of sympathy in the Queen's gt loss in Dec. 78—<sup>1</sup> a Telegram to the Vice Roy of India—praising her Troops & inquiring after them—& other like personal matters of a vy offensive character. A sharp rebuke on such occasions w<sup>ld</sup> show the impropriety of such proceedings. The other graver questions certainly ought also to be dealt with—& the Queen rejoices to hear that Mr. Gladstone is prepared to instruct his Colleagues to pay the greatest attention to this important subject. It is the effect w<sup>h</sup> such things have on the public w<sup>h</sup> does harm & tends to lower the character of the House of Commons in Europe.—

The question of the Irish Home Rulers & obstructionists is another very *serious* one w<sup>h</sup> the Queen feels sure Mr. Gladstone will do his utmost to arrest.—

She regrets the diminution of Sir B. Frere's Salary, w<sup>h</sup> will make his position impossible, she fears.

### 665 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

10, DOWNING STREET, WHITEHALL. *June 12, 1880.*

. . . The Cabinet however had a difficult subject to consider in connection with the increased number of ejectments in Ireland, and the circumstances, partly of distress, and partly of agitation, which appear to have brought about the augmentation—

They determined to refuse the Bill which has been presented by Mr. Parnell's party, but to bring in a Bill themselves, which should give relief in cases of ejectment for non-payment of rent, where the inability to pay shall be shown to be caused by the recent failure of the crops. The relief consists in relaxing that provision of the Land Act, under which non-payment of rent involves unconditional forfeiture of compensation for disturbance. . . .

666

### *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

BALMORAL. 13 *June. 1880.*

. . . What will the Gov<sup>t</sup> Bill respecting Land consist in?  
The Queen is sorry to hear the Irish Party show symptoms of

<sup>1</sup> Death of Princess Alice.

giving trouble, Mr. Gladstone will have to be very firm with them.

Respecting vaccination the Queen w<sup>ld</sup> wish to observe that in Germany where it is compulsory & vy strictly enforced—small-pox is almost unknown w<sup>h</sup> is unfortunately not the case in England.

667

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*BALMORAL CASTLE. *June 20. 1880.*

In acknowledging Mr. Gladstone's letter of yesterday's date—the Queen wishes to observe that she has *long* been of opinion that the elementary Education was of too high a standard,—& useless in consequence & thus a modification was desirable.—

With respect to Russia & the renewal of a more friendly understanding with her—The Queen *most strongly* deprecates any such notion. *She* is our *real enemy & Rival*—the only one perhaps (& she believes it) we *have*. But she *is so, that* the Queen *knows & beware* of trusting her fair words !—

Her conduct in Turkey & Asia & her conduct respecting Khiva & so on—all show *what she is*—& how *constantly* we *must* be on our guard.—Most *strenuously* w<sup>ld</sup> the Queen oppose such an idea.—

The Queen agrees in thinking that Woolwich w<sup>ld</sup> be the fittest place for the Army's Memorial (subscribed to from every portion of the Queen's dominions—) to the dear young Prince Imperial<sup>1</sup> ;—he studied there with g<sup>t</sup> distinction, & served with the Artillery—& it will be an example to *all* to follow him in his pure, unselfish & very studious life ! . . .

668

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*WINDSOR CASTLE. *June 23. 1880.*

. . . The excitement<sup>2</sup> must indeed have been vy great & the Scene *not* edifying.—The most heavy desperate sort of character.

The Queen hopes to see Mr. Gladstone on Friday.

669

*General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*WINDSOR CASTLE. *July 13. 1880.*

The Queen is anxious to know how Mr. Briggs' motion respecting the Prince Imperial Monument is be to met.

<sup>1</sup> Killed in Zululand, 1879.

<sup>2</sup> On the adjourned debate on the case of Mr. Bradlaugh.

Her Majesty was originally opposed to the idea—of the Monument being in Westminster Abbey—but having been assured there was a general wish for it and the matter having been published she felt it would be most painful to reverse the decision at which the Committee arrived at—and she earnestly trusts that as there can be no political feeling in the matter—the proposal may remain untouched and the monument be placed in the Abbey.

670 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to General Ponsonby*

July 14. 1880.

In the matter of the Prince Louis Napoleon's monument, I appreciate entirely the wisdom of the Queen's view. It is a matter of delicacy—but my endeavour will be to treat it gently, and put it aside as a settled matter, which it is not well to re-open.

671 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

LONDON. July 16. 1880.

Your Majesty may not have seen a Volume just published—*Lettere ad Antonio Panizzi*—and Mr. Gladstone humbly takes the liberty of forwarding an extract which he finds at p. 499 and which may not be without interest to Your Majesty.

Ferrucci, the writer, was a friend of Panizzi, and was esteemed by him an accomplished scholar.

672 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

(Partly printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 119–20.)

WINDSOR CASTLE. July 18. 1880.

The Queen thanks Mr. Gladstone for all his reports & letters—as well as for the extract he sent her. She thinks however that it applies to a book which the Queen had translated from the German by Ztschader—but w<sup>h</sup> she never either wrote or translated herself.<sup>1</sup>

She does not like to be praised for what she does not deserve. Her only wish was the making these beautiful meditations known in this Country. She is nevertheless much interested by the Extract.—

The Queen has been g<sup>ty</sup> shocked and disgusted at the success of Mr. Briggs' motion & at the language used to England's most

<sup>1</sup> *Victoriae Reginae Anglorum Meditationes circa mortem et aeternitatem.*

faithful ally as well as at the want of feeling & chivalry shown towards the memory of the young Prince . . . whose spotless character & high sense of honour & noble qualities, w<sup>ld</sup> have rendered a Monument to him a proud & worthy addition to Westminster Abbey w<sup>h</sup> contains many of questionable merit.

But where is chivalry & delicacy of feeling to be found in these days among many of the members of Parl<sup>t</sup> ?

As it is—St. George's will be a fitter, safer place for this Monument w<sup>h</sup> is one of the finest productions of modern Art.

The Queen c<sup>ld</sup> have wished the Members of the Govt had voted.

The Queen regrets the gt delay of & the gt difficulties produced by the Irish Land Bill.—She wishes it might be possible to remove the great objections entertained by so many in both Houses of Parliament towards this measure.

The Queen, as Lord Granville will no doubt inform him, will send a Telegram to the Sultan. This is in accordance with the precedent of 1878—when the Sultan appealed to her—& she telegraphed in consequence to the Emperor of Russia & rec<sup>d</sup> a very insolent answer.

### 673 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

LONDON. *July 20. 3 a.m. 1880.*

Mr. Gladstone with his humble duty reports to Your Majesty that when on Friday Mr. Briggs stated that in his opinion the statue of the Prince Louis Napoleon would be more properly placed in St. George's Windsor than in the Abbey, his opinion did not appear to be shared by the House and it was perhaps open to doubt whether the Speaker meant to be sarcastic. Several members of the Government had committed themselves on the subject of the monument, and in consequence absented themselves from the House. . . .

### 674 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Life of Gladstone*, III, 23-4.)

LONDON. *July 29. 1880.*

Mr. Gladstone with his humble duty reports to Your Majesty that the Cabinet consider the time to have arrived when it is needful that Sir B. Frere should be recalled from South Africa.

It is not without some differences of opinion among themselves that, upon their accession to office, they arrived at the conclusion that, if there was a prospect of progress in the great matter of Confederation, this might afford a ground of cooperation between them and Sir B. Frere, notwithstanding the strong censures which many of them in Opposition had pronounced upon his policy.

This conclusion gave the liveliest satisfaction to a large portion, perhaps to the majority of the House of Commons; but they embraced it with the more satisfaction because of Your Majesty's warm regard for Sir B. Frere, a sentiment which some among them personally share.

It was evident, however, and it was perhaps in the nature of the case, that a confidence thus restricted was far from agreeable to Sir B. Frere, who, in the opinion of Mr. Gladstone, has only been held back by a commendable self-restraint & sense of duty, from declaring himself aggrieved.

Thus, though the Cabinet have done the best they could his standing ground was not firm, nor could they make it so.

But the total failure of the effort made to induce the Cape Parliament to move has put Confederation wholly out of view, for a time quite indefinite, and almost certainly considerable.

Mr. Gladstone has therefore the painful duty of submitting to Your Majesty on behalf of the Cabinet the inclosed copy of a ciphered telegram of recall.

675

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

OSBORNE. 30 July, 1880.

Received your letter & copy of proposed telegram do not send it till you hear from me today.

676

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 124.)

OSBORNE. July 30. 1880.

The Queen has read Mr. Gladstone's letter with *deep* regret.

The Queen's private regard for Sir B. Frere should not influence the public question & indeed her acquaintance with him is not so full as Mr. Gladstone's.

The Queen has *always* considered it right to give her fullest

support to her Governors abroad especially in difficult & anxious moments, and must PROTEST against their removal *on* the change of *administration* or because a hostile feeling is supposed to exist among an *extreme* section of the House of Commons.

The Queen fears that the recall of Sir B. Frere will create an impression that Governors abroad are *only* to expect support *at home* from *political* Allies or from that *party* which *nominated* them to their post. Some expression of regret at the necessity of recalling him should appear in the Telegram.

The Queen CANNOT approve of this step, but will not oppose it, *as soon* as she learns the name of the person who it is proposed sh<sup>ld</sup> succeed Sir B. Frere at the Cape of Good Hope.

677 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

July 31. 1880.

Cabinet advise Sir Hercules Robinson,<sup>1</sup> the most eminent Colonial Governor to succeed Sir Bartle Frere. As there must be a rather considerable interval before he can arrive, it is proposed to send Sir G. Strahan a trustworthy and able man as Governor *ad interim* on his way to the Governorship of Tasmania. Cabinet think it most important to send Telegram to Sir B. Frere this evening, with regret inserted according to Your Majesty's suggestion.

678 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

OSBORNE. 31 July. 1880.

I approve of the arrangement you propose and you may telegraph accordingly.

679 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 133.)

LONDON. 14th Aug. 1880.

Mr. Gladstone, on returning from Windsor, has it for his first and most agreeable duty to offer to your Majesty his grateful thanks for the many tokens of your Majesty's gracious and condescending kindness which he had the honour to receive both at the acuter stage of his indisposition, and since he was able to leave town.

<sup>1</sup> Governor of Hong Kong, 1859-65; Ceylon, 1865-72; New South Wales, 1872-9; New Zealand, 1879-80.

He has derived the greatest benefit from his visit to a spot where all circumstances are so favourable to convalescence, and where, through your Majesty's gracious favour, he enjoyed such delightful opportunities for renewing, and once again deepening, his impressions of the beauty, majesty, and variety which Windsor presents to view in such rich profusion. . . .

680

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

OSBORNE. Aug. 16. 1880.

The Queen thanks Mr. Gladstone very much for his letter rec<sup>d</sup> yesterday m<sup>s</sup>: by which she is glad to see that he enjoyed his visit to Windsor & found himself benefitted by it. The Queen hopes Mr. & Mrs. Gladstone saw the mausoleum & the cast of the monument of her dear daughter<sup>1</sup> in it?—

The Queen feels sure that Mr. Gladstone ought to abstain from *all* mental exertion & *all* fatigue for some time to come.

She fears the Session seems likely to be prolonged indefinitely.

The Queen intends leaving for Scotland on the 26<sup>th</sup> (her dear Husband's birthday). Had Mr. Gladstone been well she w<sup>ld</sup> have asked to see him before her departure,—but she does not for a moment dream of his coming here, now, that he requires rest & quiet & w<sup>ld</sup> insist on his not thinking of attempting it.

681 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

HOLMBURY. 17 Aug. 1880.

Mr. Gladstone humbly thanks Your Majesty for the very great kindness of Your Majesty's letter just received and he has at least a good intention to abide by Your Majesty's wise injunctions. Indeed he does not as yet feel equal to the prolonged transaction of public business.

He was able to avail himself before leaving Windsor of Your Majesty's gracious permission to visit the Mausoleum. He had not previously seen it in its highly finished state. As Your Majesty seems to invite or permit it, he presumes to say that he was deeply struck with its worthiness for its purpose, with its rich and solemn beauty. The whole conception of the monument to the Princess Louis of Hesse appeared to him to deserve the highest praise.

<sup>1</sup> Princess Alice.

682

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

OSBORNE. Aug. 24. 1880.

. . . She fears nothing satisfactory will be elicited from the Russian Ambassador. He, like M. Giers<sup>1</sup> will simply deny everything & we must not be simple enough to believe it, but take every means we can to obtain proofs, which we most likely shall do—in Afghanistan, during the present Campaign.

The Queen wishes to mention to Mr. Gladstone, the complete state of poverty in which poor old Lady ——— & her daughters are left. . . .

He was 94—& one of our most distinguished Diplomats—one who Russia feared ;—his widow & children surely *have* a claim on the Country even in these Radical days, when the House of Commons seems too often to forget such services.

683

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

OSBORNE. Aug. 26. 1880.

. . . She does *not* wish to confer this 1<sup>st</sup> Vacant Garter on Lord Derby. She explained her views on this subject to Lord Granville & he will doubtless inform Mr. Gladstone of them. . . .

684 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

OFF FALMOUTH. Aug. 28. 1880.

Mr. Gladstone . . . has had the honour to receive Your Majesty's letter of the 26<sup>th</sup> in which Your Majesty is pleased to express a desire that some person other than Lord Derby should be selected for the offer of the first Garter which has been open for disposal since the accession of the present Ministry.

Mr. Gladstone cheerfully and at once, upon this expression of Your Majesty's pleasure, withdraws the submission he had made ; and he will at once tender the Garter to the Duke of Bedford ; having learned through Lord Granville that this step would have Your Majesty's gracious approval.

With respect to Lord Derby, although his union with the Liberal party is of recent formation, yet Your Majesty will understand that his support, by speech and vote in the House of Lords, of the Disturbance Compensation Bill was, from the

<sup>1</sup> Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs.



point of view taken by the Government not only an act of courage and decision, but also a considerable public service in connection with the anxious duty of administering the law and maintaining the peace in Ireland. This was the special consideration which had weighed with Mr. Gladstone, and which he feels assured Your Majesty will graciously bear in mind should he on an appropriate occasion place the subject under the consideration of Your Majesty. . . .

685

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

BALMORAL CASTLE. Aug. 31. 1880.

. . . She is anxious to say a few words on the subject of Lord Derby, & the Garter, *in general*.

She thinks that the Garter, *one of*, if not *the highest* Order in Europe—sh<sup>d</sup> *not* be looked upon merely as a reward from the Prime Minister for the time being—for supporting any particular Bill or measure—but as a reward for general *patriotic conduct*—as well as a tribute to high rank & character, naturally—to be bestowed as much as possible on those who belong to the Party in Office. If this was done & understood—the Garter w<sup>d</sup> have more real value & w<sup>d</sup> be never willingly accepted.

As regards Lord Derby—the Queen thinks that his conduct when *in Office* was very far from what c<sup>d</sup> be approved by *any Govt.* . . .

The Queen trusts therefore that it will be some time before Mr. Gladstone submits Lord Derby's name to her for the high distinction of the Garter.—

The Queen hopes Mr. Gladstone has enjoyed his Sea-trip—tho' she cannot but think more complete quiet w<sup>d</sup> have been better for him.

686

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 138.)

[Telegram]

6 Sept. 1880.

I think that Sir F. Roberts should receive at once some mark of my appreciation of his great and brilliant services. I have sent him my congratulations through the Viceroy.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> On his march from Kabul to Kandahar.

687 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

BALMORAL. Sept. 7. 1880.

I have not yet received your answer to my wish for a mark of distinction for Sir F. Roberts. His grand march & most brilliant & important victory call for this.

688 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

BALMORAL CASTLE. Sept. 10. 1880.

The Queen is glad that her wish that honours sh<sup>d</sup> be at once conferred on Generals Stewart & Roberts has been forthwith carried out. We owe Sir F. Roberts a great debt of gratitude for his splendid march & brilliant victory. . . .

689 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

BALMORAL. Sept. 18. 1880.

The Queen fears British Ambassador at Constantinople is pushing to hostilities. She will not consent to war with our old ally Turkey, whom the country always supported. She has repeatedly stated to Lord Granville that she *will not* sanction a reversal of the policy of the last few years, to which she had willingly given her consent as she believed it to be for the true interests of this Empire; we are now playing into the hands of Russia. The Queen feels particularly aggrieved as Lord Granville assured Prince Leopold on coming into Office that The Queen need be under *no apprehension* as to foreign affairs, and asked her to tell Mr. Gladstone that she expected there would be no reversal of [policy] instead of which we have gone nearer and nearer to war with Turkey. The Queen will never consent.

690 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

BALMORAL CASTLE. Sept. 24. 1880.

. . . The Officers at the Cape cause the Queen much anxiety, as indeed they do in almost every direction, & it is most unfortunate that a man like Sir B. Frere—of such energy & who understood the question so well sh<sup>d</sup> just have left.—

The Harvest here is the finest known for upwards of 50 years—& we have had no rain to speak of.

691 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*HAWARDEN. *September 26. 1880.*

. . . Mr. Gladstone deeply regrets that the circumstances of the Empire should at various points be such as to cause Your Majesty special anxiety ; an anxiety which cannot for the moment be diminished by the Sultan's having now, apparently, thrown off the mask in the Dulcigno negotiation,<sup>1</sup> and having said to the United Powers of Europe what, if at all, should have been said some months ago.

With regard to the disturbances in South Africa Mr. Gladstone is not aware whether the policy in Basutoland, which appears to have been the occasion of them, was due simply to the responsible ministers or in any degree to the initiative action of the Governor. If an error has been committed the Colonists, having to bear the consequences, will probably discover and repair it speedily, which might have been less easy had it been a result of Imperial policy. All things considered Mr. Gladstone cannot but feel very thankful for the state of affairs in the Transvaal and in Zululand.

Mr. Gladstone is much gratified to hear of the fine harvest in Aberdeenshire. In this neighbourhood the results are more mixed and the wheat on the whole deficient, though less so than last year.

692 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 147-8.)BALMORAL CASTLE. *Oct. 2. 1880.*

. . . She is glad to see that the Govt. are not inclined to be carried away into any rash action with respect to the Past in which they w<sup>ld</sup> most assuredly not be followed or joined by other Powers.

The Queen cannot however refrain from expressing her regret at the course taken in June on this question, as it has tended to bring about this very serious complication. The great evil with respect to Turkey is that, from her believing for she has not done before that England wishes her ill—she distrusts *us*—& refuses to do *any* thing to satisfy England ; whereas previously she trusted *us*—& the Queen's Ambassadors had great power there.

The Queen is very glad to hear that Mr. Gladstone is prepared

<sup>1</sup> As to the frontiers of Montenegro.

to take strong measures against the Land League—w<sup>h</sup> is doing such terrible mischief & producing by Mr. Parnell's language—encouraging as it does *murder*—a state of affairs unequalled in any Civilised nation.

The Govt. must be firm & clear itself from grave suspicions on this subject. The Queen is not easy as to the state of the Cape.

693

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III. 149.)

BALMORAL CASTLE. Oct. 14. 1880.

The Queen acknowledges Mr. Gladstone's last letter & is glad that measures are to be taken with regard to this monstrous Land League—but they sh<sup>ld</sup> not be delayed or the Govt will be held responsible for loss of life.—

Not feeling sure whether Mr. Gladstone hears from all sides what passes there—she sends this extract of a letter from an influential person in Ireland w<sup>h</sup> she thinks shows the state of affairs as well as hand-bill posted up evy where (both of w<sup>h</sup> when *done with* she w<sup>ld</sup> be glad to have back) w<sup>h</sup> is vy treasonable.

694

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

Oct. 15. 1880.

State of Ireland becomes worse & worse—earnestly hope the measures will not be delayed till more outrages and murders take place—am writing to you about it.

695 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

HAWARDEN. 15 Oct. 1880.

. . . Mr. Gladstone has been very sensible of the evils of delay and wrote to the Irish Government as far back as on the 7th to expedite the proceedings of the Law Officers, for while their duty was most delicate, any appearance of indifference on the part of Your Majesty's advisers in such circumstances however unfounded constituted a public mischief.

Lord Spencer<sup>1</sup> comes to Hawarden from Dublin tomorrow when Mr. Gladstone will have the opportunity of learning exactly the state of things.

Without doubt it is extremely grave. At the same time, as far

<sup>1</sup> Lord President of the Council.

as Mr. Gladstone is at present aware the peculiar character of it has reference rather to the general insecurity of property than to the extent of crime committed against persons. The agrarian offences reported to the Cabinet in London were of the same number as in 1870 and were very few as compared with the more remote year of 1831.

Mr. Gladstone congratulates Your Majesty on the bloodless issue of the question of the Montenegrin frontier. If the Sultan shall fulfil his new engagement, it cannot fail to be a great relief to Your Majesty's feelings.

696 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

10, DOWNING STREET. WHITEHALL. Oct 19. 1880.

Mr. Gladstone . . . with his humble duty, returns the Placard according to Your Majesty's command.

He is under the impression that this placard has been considered by the Irish Government. It is a bad, mischievous, venomous document, but craftily drawn, and not, as Mr. Gladstone thinks, seditious. The writer of the Extract is (he believes) mistaken in supposing that at a former time seditious language could have been treated as constituting High Treason. . . .

Your Majesty is most justly sensible of the evils of delay in instituting the Irish Prosecutions. But the case stands as follows. . . .

The state of Ireland is without doubt not only deplorable but menacing. Its distinctive character is not so much that of a general insecurity of life, as that of a widespread conspiracy against property. The evils are distinct; both of them sufficiently grave. There is one most painful feature in the case, namely that the leaders of the disturbed part of the people incite them to break the law, whereas in the times of O'Connell there can be little doubt that in the midst of a strong political agitation they stoutly denounced agrarian crime and generally enforced observance of the law.

The Irish people are thus placed in a position of greater temptation than at any former period within Mr. Gladstone's recollection. There can be no wonder that agrarian crime should have increased. In 1852 offences of this class were 907, in 1870 1329, in 1879 863; but in 1875 they had been only 135, and in 1866 only 87 (when however Fenianism was greatly more active): moreover in 1880 down to Oct. 15 they have been 1001. It remains to

be now seen in the first place what will be the effect of the prosecutions on Agrarian crime.

In this painful state of things, it is not to be supposed that the people of Ireland generally have failed, under the beneficial legislation of the last half century, to make a real advance in civilisation. For the disturbed year 1879, the homicides in Ireland were 64; but for the disturbed year 1831 \* they were 242. The cases of firing with intent to kill were 41. But in 1831 they were 328. The very brutal offence of maiming animals to injure the owners was recorded for 1879 in 125 cases but for 1831 in 290, the incendiary fires for 1879 were 254 for 1831 they were 568. It is [in] the misleaders of the Irish people that the root of the mischief seems to lie and this is a very special reason for striking at the heads and not at persons comparatively insignificant in the endeavour to grapple with the system which reduces law to a mockery and order to a chaos.

\* Or 1832, the record has a misprint.

697

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

BALMORAL. Nov. 2. 1880.

See now that the prosecutions are to commence tomorrow. Wish to know mode. But my feelings very anxious. Government should not be considered as wanting in courage and firmness as the state of affairs is so very serious.

698

*General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 153-4.)

BALMORAL. 2 November. 1880.

. . . The Queen is rather anxious about the state of affairs in Ireland.

She receives communications from some who declare that Anarchy prevails and from others who complain of the Irish Executive.

But from her Irish Government she receives no information whatever.

Would it not be right that the Lord Lieutenant or the Chief Secretary should let Her Majesty know what are their opinions on the State of Ireland, and to report on the proceedings they are taking?

699 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

HAWARDEN. Nov. 3. 1880.

Mr. Gladstone with his humble duty transmits to Your Majesty a memorandum which he has obtained from London and which sets forth with clearness the rather complicated account of the disturbances in the South of Africa.<sup>1</sup> It is probable that a very short time will add much to our information, and the meeting of the Cabinet, which has been appointed for tenth instant, will be opportune.

The persons included in the criminal informations yesterday lodged in Dublin are fourteen in number. Five of them are members of Parliament; Messrs. Parnell, Dillon, Biggar, Sexton, J. D. Sullivan: the other nine, officers or prominent—i.e. violent—adherents of the League.

700 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to General Ponsonby*

HAWARDEN. Nov. 4. 1880.

I attended at once to Her Majesty's wish about reports from Ireland. I think it will be very desirable that she should see the last accounts of the Constabulary, which give a real *conspectus* of the country. To private letters, unless from very wise people, I attach a moderate value. They are apt to give second-hand knowledge as if it were first-hand, and to treat what is within arm's length distance as if it were representative of the whole country. Ireland is *speckled* with disease, but much of the surface is still free, though the case is indeed bad enough.

701 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

BALMORAL. Nov. 7. 1880.

. . . I gave Her Majesty your note to me which contained much in a few words. The Queen commands me to remark that she has not heard much from private letters but that most of her information has been derived from newspapers—not a very trustworthy source. She will therefore be glad of any reports or letters that may tell her the true state of the case. . . .

<sup>1</sup> A large assembly of Boers at Paardekraal had demanded the restoration of the Republic.

702

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 135-6)

BALMORAL. November 7. 1880.

The Queen is extremely anxious to point out to Mr. Gladstone the immense importance of the utmost caution on the part of all the Ministers but especially of himself, at the coming dinner in the City. There is such danger in every direction that a word too much might do irreparable mischief. She knows well how difficult it is in *after dinner* Speeches to avoid touching on dangerous ground—but she has always been in the habit of expressing her anxiety on this subject to her Ministers.

She therefore earnestly warns Mr. Gladstone & his Colleagues to be most careful as to what they say respecting Ireland—leaving no doubt as to their determination to maintain the law & put down the terrible spirit of lawlessness & violence—nothing to encourage the idea of War in the East, *or any decided intention*, & of the abandonment of Kandahar—w<sup>h</sup> w<sup>ld</sup> encourage our Enemies to believe us ready to give up our position in India. The Cape is also in a most serious condition.

It need not prevent (as regards India) our taking any course w<sup>h</sup> we may think proper, but no *decided & irrevocable* opinion should be expressed in public.

It is rather unfortunate that the Ministers have to attend the dinner in the City at this moment but it constantly happens that the Lord Mayor's dinner falls at moments of great political excitement.

703 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 158-9)

DOWNING STREET. Nov. 9. 1880.

Mr. Gladstone has had the honor to receive Your Majesty's letter relating to the Lord Mayor's Festival, and with his humble duty he can venture to assure Your Majesty that the other Ministers who will be asked to speak on the important toasts are together with himself fully sensible of the delicacy, and therefore the gravity of the occasion on which Your Majesty most justly dwells. From the number of toasts and speeches usually set down, little time will remain for many of them. However this



may be, it will be Mr. Gladstone's endeavour and that of his colleagues to deal as prudently as may be with an occasion which perhaps they, like him, would gladly have avoided, and to describe the views and intentions of the Government so far as it may be necessary to advert to them, within the lines already laid before Your Majesty and announced as occasion has arisen to the country from the throne and otherwise.

704 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

BALMORAL CASTLE. Nov. 10. 1880.

The Queen thanks Mr. Gladstone for his Letter rec<sup>d</sup> this eve<sup>s</sup> & is glad to see that he agreed in her views respecting the Speeches at the dinner in the City yesterday eve<sup>s</sup>.

705 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

BALMORAL CASTLE. Nov. 11. 1880.

. . . She is anxious to draw his attention to the frightful tyranny & want of religious liberty now existing in the French Republic.—Mr. Gladstone has always been so strenuous a supporter of liberty of conscience,—& has always so strongly reprobated all oppression & acts of injustice & cruelty with foreign countries that she *cannot* but believe that he must view with pain & indignation the treatment of the Religious Orders in France. She hears from many that it is only the beginning & that it is a prelude to the closing of all Churches & destruction of all Religion!

Will Mr. Gladstone let this go on without one word of remark in deprecation, from himself?

Is monarchical constitutional Great Britain to look on & be on the most intimate terms with a Republic, which in fact approaches the Commune?

There is no oppression & tyranny so great as that of a Republic.

706 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

DOWNING STREET. Nov. 13. 1880.

Mr. Gladstone with his humble duty acknowledges Your Majesty's gracious letter, just received, on the proceedings of the Republican Government in France.

While admitting that all judgments about questions of interior policy in another country ought to be formed with reserve, Mr.

Gladstone humbly follows Your Majesty in questioning the wisdom and justice of recent proceedings in France.

It is not difficult in his opinion to show that the laws recently laid down by ecclesiastical authority in the Church of Rome involve pretensions which if fully admitted are incompatible with the obligations of citizenship, and it may also be true that most of the religious orders or their members are too much disposed to acknowledge these laws. But even if this be so, he still believes the late proceedings are wrong, even as it would be wrong to act in this country on the prohibition of the religious orders which was contained in the Act of 1829 for the relief of Roman Catholics.

Mr. Gladstone trusts that there is no foundation for the belief that measures directly aiming at the exercise of religious worship are contemplated in France ; at any rate he is ignorant of any such intention.

If it be not presumptuous on his part to refer to his own personal conduct, he may mention that some two or three years back he went so far as to join with others in a respectful expostulation intended to deprecate the intolerant proceedings which have been taken in France.

Mr. Gladstone ventures to add that he is not conscious of any peculiar intimacy in the relations of the two Governments at this moment nor does he perceive that it is likely soon to arise.

707 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

DOWNING STREET. Nov. 17. 1880.

Mr. Gladstone with his humble duty reports to Your Majesty that the Cabinet has been occupied during its whole sitting today partly in conversation on matters connected with the Land tenure and general improvement of Ireland, but principally with the very difficult questions which are connected with the operations of the Land League and the crime and alarms resulting from them. The discussion will be resumed at the next Cabinet which will meet on Friday.

708 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

Nov. 18. 1880.

Your letter just received does not give me as much information as I could wish. As I am most anxious about the state of affairs trust you will write me fuller details tomorrow.

709 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

Nov. 19. 1880.

Mr. Gladstone presents his humble duty to Your Majesty and regrets that Your Majesty should have found his account of the last meeting of the Cabinet inadequate. The case was peculiar, and there were no facts to report. In all the experience Mr. Gladstone has had of Cabinet since 1843 he hardly recollects a matter of so much complexity and difficulty as the question what are the obligations of a Government, in its capacity as guardian of order, growing out of the present state of Ireland? It has been the desire of Your Majesty's servants without exception to use the best means in their power for arriving at a wise decision. This appeared to be that all the members of the Cabinet should as is usual but with a peculiar care throw their views and impressions into common stock, but subject to correction and not as announcements of judgments finally formed. This being so there was absolutely no matter which Mr. Gladstone could report to Your Majesty beyond the brief account he had the honour of sending.

To-day the Cabinet meeting again determined that they would advise Your Majesty to order a very short prorogation of Parliament. This will be interpreted, it is probable, and not wrongly interpreted, as a notice to Ireland as well as to Great Britain, that unremitting attention is given by Your Majesty's servants to the condition of that country, and that it may become at a very early date a question whether an appeal should be made to Parliament.

Mr. Forster will proceed to Ireland tomorrow and will return to attend the Cabinet which is appointed to meet next week on Thursday.

It may interest Your Majesty on an occasion of this kind if Mr. Gladstone tries to give some idea of the several considerations which bear upon this question one way or other.

It may be feared to be found tediously long while at the same time he feels it to be imperfect. But such as it is he submits it to Your Majesty's indulgent judgment.

On the one hand, there is in parts of Ireland an extensive paralysis of important civil rights connected with the ownership and occupation of land. This condition of things has been stimu-

lated by and is immediately due to the operations of the Land League.

The area over which such influences prevail has been extending.

There is a large increase in agrarian offences connected with property.

There is a reasonable apprehension that, ere long, evictions, which have been in a considerable degree discontinued during the last six weeks, may be resumed: and that if this were to happen it would be followed by a great increase of crime. And this increase might involve life and property together.

It cannot be said that, while this state of things prevails, the ends of civil government are tolerably attained. The serious and very difficult question is to determine the time and forms of the remedy.

As regards the rights connected with the ownership and occupation of land, there is now an opinion, which appears to have spread even among intelligent Irish Landowners, and which is believed to be sustained by the evidence before the Irish Land Commission, that a further and not immaterial change in the land laws is necessary.

If so, there would be great advantage, of every kind, in presenting to Parliament simultaneously, whatever measures might be deemed necessary for the amendment of the Land Laws, and for the maintenance of order and the enforcement of the rights of property.

The facility or difficulty of dealing with Parliament is not to be overlooked. There is little doubt that a measure of coercion now presented, though it probably (not certainly) would be approved by a large majority, might be ably and vehemently opposed, might take a considerable time to pass into law, and when passed would for the first time be passed in opposition to the sense of a large majority of the representatives of Ireland.

The Land League is now on its trial before the Courts. It is possible that there may be delays,—but at present the appearances are that the trials will take place in December, and they may conclude before an act of coercion could be passed.

Their failure would strengthen the position of the Government in proposing whatever coercion might still be required by the state of things, and, on the other hand, the state of things would be improved by their success.

Although agrarian offences against property have increased largely, those affecting life have not increased,—indeed agrarian homicides have rather diminished.

It is evident that the existing state of things, though liable to exaggeration by panic and terror, cannot be tolerated and indeed this is plainly admitted by the measures which the Government have already adopted.

As respects the time, it is further urged that the Government have pledged themselves to ascertain what the present law can do, before asking for new power.

It might be difficult to shew that, since this determination of the Government new circumstances have occurred of such a character as to warrant its being superseded.

Much difference of opinion exists upon the question whether a suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act would go to the root of the mischief. It is admitted that the Leaders, Mr. Parnell and others, could not be arrested under it ; but it is contended that the tools might be taken up or driven by fear out of the country ; and that, they being removed, the exercise of the civil rights paralysed would revive. On the other side it is urged that the conspiracy against property is too widely spread, and too much rooted, in the appetites or resentments of a portion of the people, to be repressed by the very limited action in the way of arbitrary imprisonment which alone would be possible in applying a suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act to agrarian crime.

710

### *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

BALMORAL CASTLE. Nov. 22. 1880.

The Queen thanks Mr. Gladstone for his letter & for the resumé of the arguments used with reference to Ireland.

No doubt it *may* EVENTUALLY be *necessary* for the Government to prepare measures of land reform for that Country but it is *impossible* to expect calm & trustworthy opinions of *this subject* at *present* & hurried legislation w<sup>ld</sup> only *increase* the evils, & be *attributed* to *panic* on the part of the Government.

On the other hand the *Irish* are rapidly becoming the *slaves* of the *Land League* organization whose *law* is *obeyed* while *that* of the *realm* is *defied* !

The *police reports* prove that the *power* of the *League* is *daily increasing*. Is it *not clear* that the necessity has *already* arisen

that Mr. Gladstone alluded to on the 9<sup>th</sup> of Nov : & that he should redeem the *pledge* he then *gave* to appeal for *greater* power for maintaining order in Ireland ?

The Queen wishes Mr. Gladstone to communicate her opinion to the Cabinet.

711 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

DOWNING STREET. Nov. 24. 1880.

Mr. Gladstone presents his humble duty to Your Majesty and reports that he has at once sent round to his colleagues Your Majesty's letter on legislation for Ireland. . . .

712 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. Nov. 26. 1880.

. . . The Queen will be very anxious to hear further details about Ireland from Mr. Gladstone, & would be glad if Mr. Forster<sup>1</sup> would also attend the Council so that she could see him.

713 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

DOWNING STREET. Dec. 13. 1880.

Mr. Gladstone . . . reports that the Cabinet met this day to hear Mr. Forster report on the state of Ireland, and to consider whether it called for any and what resolution on the part of Your Majesty's advisers. Mr. Forster described the increase of offences, especially of what may be called violent intimidation, and the increasing disposition of the people, over a widening area, to give way to the pressure of the Land League and to join its ranks. The least unsatisfactory feature of the case is that offences affecting life do not increase, being indeed, as Mr. Gladstone believes, below the limit of last year : but then a considerable number of individuals amounting now to 120 are under the special protection of the police.

These are in certain cases reluctant to serve as jurors, and there are other indications, which tend to show how far the better part of the Irish people are from yet having attained to the habits of a free and self-reliant community ; this, though not one of the most observed, is not the least painful part of the case for such habits cannot be imparted by laws nor can the lack of them be supplied by the action of the State.

<sup>1</sup> Chief Secretary.

Mr. Forster however, speaking for the whole Irish Government, deemed it essential that the Cabinet should empower him to make it known that he will on the meeting of Parliament be prepared to propose repressive measures. It is difficult to determine at once their exact form, especially as regards direct action against the Land League, which is the main source and seat of mischief ; but it will in all likelihood be deemed necessary to suspend the writs of Habeas Corpus, while it remains for consideration whether other provisions should be added.

The Cabinet have not swerved from their former opinion that it would be right, if possible, to announce at the opening of the Session their policy as a whole and therefore to be prepared with the outline and basis of a measure in relation to Irish Land. They will meet tomorrow to consider this subject, being now confidentially in substantial possession of the main ideas of the Commission appointed last Session : ideas, which are of such a character as to make it important that the Cabinet should lose no time in examining whether they are or are not admissible. . . .

714

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. Dec. 13. 1880.

The Queen thanks Mr. Gladstone for his account of the deliberations of the Cabinet on the difficult & alarming state of affairs in Ireland.—

The Queen cannot deny that she *regrets* that measures were not taken at first to repress the Land League before they reached their present proportions. But the Queen must *maintain* her opinion that in the *present* excited state of Ireland *any attempt* at *legislation* would *fail* to *satisfy one* party while it would exasperate the *other*, & the measure hurried through in a moment of panic w<sup>ld</sup> necessarily be a failure.

The Queen *earnestly* hopes that the *Law* may *first* be *vindicated* in *Ireland* & that *careful consideration* may be given *without haste* to a Land bill for ameliorating the evils complained of.—The Queen wishes Mr. Gladstone to read this letter to the Cabinet.

715 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

DOWNING STREET. Dec. 14. 1880.

Mr. Gladstone . . . reports that at the meeting of the Cabinet today he did not fail to obey Your Majesty's commands by reading

to his colleagues the letter which Your Majesty had honoured him by writing.

Mr. Gladstone is not aware that there arises, upon the topics touched in that letter, any matter on which the Cabinet are likely to advise in a manner opposed to the sense of it. They would be of opinion, he has no doubt, that, as a case of necessity has now arisen for special and repressive measures in Ireland, the prosecution of those measures will form the first duty of the Government, in point of time as well as in point of obligation.

The Cabinet has been occupied today in considering, but only in a preliminary way, some branches of the great and complex question of Land Tenures : their relation to the Land Act of 1870, to the actual and probable state of opinion in Great Britain as well as in Ireland, to the structure of rural society, and to the principles of equity and justice. The Ministers are also engaged in informing themselves of the facts disclosed in recent inquiry, and in the very numerous contributions to the argument which have been supplied from various quarters. It is possible that they may not until after Christmas find themselves in a position to proceed to positive conclusions.

716

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 166-7.)

OSBORNE. Dec. 26. 1880.

The Queen feels much anxiety about the Cape & expects that the Govt. will take energetic measures to assert her authority in those parts of the Colony w<sup>h</sup> have revolted. The Boers are a dangerous foe—& we shall have to support Sir G. Colley <sup>1</sup>strongly.

As the time for the reassembling of the Cabinet approaches the Queen wishes to repeat her decided opinion that *no* measure of *any* kind sh<sup>d</sup> be brought forward *till* those of coercion & those to give power to put down the state of lawlessness in Ireland have been *passed*.—Mr. Gladstone told the Queen that he was desirous of *announcing* a *new* Land Bill at the *same* time.

But she thinks this will be *impossible except* in the *most general terms*, *without* entering into details. For it w<sup>ld</sup> only look like weakness, & nothing, as Mr. Gladstone himself said to the Queen *can* satisfy the Land League.

Moreover Ld Kenmare (& others share his opinion) says that

<sup>1</sup> Governor of Natal.



the *Land* is a mere pretext; "It is sedition & revolution; the Land has nothing to do with it."

The state of affairs is very *serious*—& the language used by Mr. Bright<sup>1</sup> & Mr. Chamberlain<sup>2</sup> on some recent occasion is totally at variance with their positions in the Cabinet, & calculated to encourage the Irish. Mr. Gladstone sh<sup>ld</sup> tell them so, & they sh<sup>ld</sup> take an early opportunity of doing away with the impression caused thereby.

It is often said (& Mr. Gladstone himself said so—when the present Govt was formed) that Radicals in office are seldom dangerous. But that is when they are not *allowed* to *influence* the views of others or to use language w<sup>h</sup> none of their Colleagues can approve —

The Queen cannot help sometimes remembering the day when Mr. Gladstone was sworn in at Claremont in 1841 (40 years ago) on the formation of Sir R. Peel's Conservative Govt<sup>3</sup>!—*That* was an admirable Government! How few remain of those who formed it now!

### 717 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

HAWARDEN. Dec. 28. 1880.

Mr. Gladstone has had the honor this morning to receive Your Majesty's letter of the 26th. Deeply touched by the appeal Your Majesty is pleased to make to the recollections of distant and less anxious times, he will not trust himself to say anything upon it during the hurried hours of this his last day at Hawarden. He hopes very shortly to recur to it. In the meantime, he will only say that so far as he can presume to forecast the probable conduct of the Cabinet, there will be nothing in it to exaggerate Your Majesty's solicitude.

Quite apart from opinions held and even retained on the policy of annexing the Transvaal, Lord Kimberley<sup>4</sup> proposes to instruct Sir H. Robinson<sup>5</sup> in unequivocal terms on the duty of maintaining the annexation.

As regards Ireland there can be no question as to the precedence in time of what concerns the obligation, primary in rank, with respect to the full establishment of order and protection of

<sup>1</sup> Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.

<sup>2</sup> President of the Board of Trade.

<sup>3</sup> Cf Vol I, 28-9

<sup>4</sup> Colonial Secretary.

<sup>5</sup> High Commissioner of South Africa.

loyal and faithkeeping persons ; while Your Majesty will not fail to perceive how necessary it is in regard to the Land Laws that the fundamental principles, which have to guide the conduct of the Government should be known and no ground left for the encouragement of unreasonable and dangerous expectations.

718 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to General Ponsonby*

*Private.*

HAWARDEN Dec. 28. 1880.

The Queen is anxious that I should speak to Bright and Chamberlain about passages in their speeches.

The extreme gravity of the questions raised in Ireland with regard to repression, and especially to Land, makes me unwilling, unless under necessity, to enter upon secondary issues, which in smoother times it would be easy enough to deal with.

I am not however fully aware what are the passages or sentiments in the speeches delivered at Birmingham, which Her Majesty has particularly in her mind. You may have heard the Queen refer to them ; and I should be much obliged if you could give me any light.

The Queen has named to me words about the House of Lords used by Mr. Bright : I imagine those commented upon by Lord Carnarvon.<sup>1</sup>

It is certainly not the business of a minister to raise or suggest questions respecting the root of a body which, while unhappily opposed to every Liberal administration (except Lord Aberdeen's, under which it showed great wisdom), yet is undoubtedly a co-ordinate historic portion of the Legislature. On the other hand, Mr. Bright is to some extent an exceptional man without official traditions ; and there is no *spite* or latent purpose in these occasional utterances.

719 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

*Private.*

OSBORNE, December 29. 1880.

The Queen objected to Mr. Bright's reference to the House of Lords and thought that he and Mr. Chamberlain did not sufficiently condemn the outrages in Ireland. Her chief objection was to the general tone of both the speeches made on the eve of an important Cabinet Council.

<sup>1</sup> Colonial Secretary in Mr. Disraeli's Government, 1874-8.

But I certainly think with you that it might scarcely be desirable to repeat these remarks to those two Ministers.

720 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to General Ponsonby*

HAWARDEN, 29th December, 1880.

I understand Her Majesty is under the impression that Mr. Courtney whom Sir W. Harcourt<sup>1</sup> proposes to appoint as his Under Secretary is an extreme Radical.

I am not aware of Mr. Courtney or of this designation or indeed the name of Radical at all. He is a gentleman of great talent, great mental activity and assiduity, and I should add in confidence to make my portrait complete considerable self-assertion, who made his way to a position as Writer in the *Times*.

He has been strongly for coercion in Ireland and went out of his way to condemn me, some time back, about the Purchase Warrant.

721 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

OSBORNE, December 29, 1880.

The Queen hopes you will ask Sir William Harcourt to reconsider this recommendation.

Mr. Leonard Courtney is a man who expresses very extreme opinions. As the last appointment to office (Mr. Trevelyan)<sup>2</sup> was made from this section of the Liberal party The Queen thinks it would be fair to choose for the present appointment one of Your supporters who hold more moderate views.

722 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to General Ponsonby*

29th December, 1880.

I had written the note preceding this before I received your letter. As far as my knowledge goes, it is accurate. There is however a difficulty in the want of an accurate test or definition. Possibly Mr. Courtney may have some opinions that would be called Radical, and some of a very opposite character. As regards the former, he would certainly be safer in a secondary office, than he could be with his great industry, and tenacity of purpose, on the Independent Benches.

The position of the Crown, and also of the Prime Minister, with regard to these appointments, is peculiar. They are the appoint-

<sup>1</sup> Home Secretary.

<sup>2</sup> Civil Lord of the Admiralty.

ments of the Secretary of State. I learn from Granville that he was sent for by Lord Palmerston, not by Lord Melbourne, when he was made Under Secretary in the Foreign Office. Sir W. Harcourt expressed his wish in this case with a view to the efficient transaction of the difficult business of his office. Had I taken an objection on the ground that Mr. Courtney belonged to the extreme section of the party, he might have said with truth that it is at the least as necessary to have regard to personal efficiency and activity in selection for secondary offices, as to the sectional position of individuals ; but he might also challenge me to prove my point, and this I should be unable to do.

Her Majesty will I think see that I should hardly be able to urge on the Secretary of State with due force the withdrawal of this nomination ; while the fact would transpire, and mischief would follow.

I may perhaps add that the Cabinet will during the next few days probably have to take on questions of the utmost difficulty and importance affecting Ireland two decisions which will severely try the gentlemen of extreme opinions. I have no doubt that in view of the great moment of smoothing difficulties in the way of such decisions, the proceeding which Sir W. Harcourt proposes to take is politic.

723 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

LONDON. Dec. 30. 1880.

Mr. Gladstone . . . reports that the Cabinet has this day accepted the proposal of the Irish Government that repressive enactments should be framed for submission to Parliament at the opening of the Session, with a view to the restoration of order and of the free exercise of civil rights in Ireland. Of these repressive enactments, the Cabinet consider that the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act should form an essential part.

It would be discreditable to any Government formed in a free Country to adopt a decision of this nature without jealous examination and reluctance ; but it is accepted under a strong belief in the necessity and obligation of the case, as well as with a strong sense of the Parliamentary difficulties it may entail and the obstacle it may offer to the progress of business needful for the general interests of the country.

724 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*OSBORNE, *December* 31. 1880.

The Queen hopes the next appointment to a place in your Government will be made from the party of the Moderate Liberals.

725 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

Dec. 31. 1880.

Mr Gladstone presents his humble duty to Your Majesty and prefaces his report of the proceedings of the Cabinet today with offering to Your Majesty his fervent good wishes on the occasion of the New Year for Your Majesty's health and happiness, during its continuance and through many future years. . . .

726 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 178)OSBORNE, *Jan.* 1. 1881.

. . . She thanks him for his good wishes & prays that the many clouds which now surround the political Horizon & her Empire may by God's blessing be dispelled & that Mr. Gladstone may be guided by Him to do what is just & right ! She wishes him & his family a happy New Year. . . .

727 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*OSBORNE, *Jan.* 1. 1881.

The Queen was glad to learn from Mr. Gladstone the decision arrived at in the last two Cabinet Councils & while concurring in the expression of regret that the state of Ireland makes it necessary to use coercive measures, feels bound to add that she thinks an earlier recognition of this necessity would have checked the evil before it reached its present formidable aspect.

The opponents of all proposals for Coercion in Ireland have been encouraged in their attitude by the belief that two Members at least of the Ministry sympathised with them & the Queen therefore rejoices to learn that Mr. Bright & Mr. Chamberlain unite with the other Members of the Govt. in their desire to suppress sedition & disorder.

It is satisfactory to learn that the Land Bill under consideration does not contemplate any interference with the basis of property

in land & the Queen trusts that the interests of all classes will be properly guarded.

The Queen is glad that Mr. Bright & Mr. Chamberlain are working so well with the rest of the Govt but she still thinks it wld be as well if Mr. Gladstone could judiciously give a hint that it is *not* fitting for a *responsible* Minister to speak publicly against the House of Lords as Mr. Bright did at Birmingham.

728 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

OSBORNE. *January 5. 1881.*

The Ministers<sup>1</sup> are waiting for your answer.<sup>2</sup> I think a positive declaration of not retaining Kandahar most dangerous. Anything short of a positive declaration I would consent to.

729 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

OSBORNE. *Jan. 5. 1881.*

I strongly object to stipulation about Candahar, as I was assured nothing should be yet declared as to the abandonment. Cannot this be omitted from the Speech ?

730 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

[Telegram]

*Jan. 5. 1881.*

Candahar. Cabinet advised and deem urgent. Sixth September now four months ago. Viceroy afterwards informed. Dispatch unusually delayed in deference to Your Majesty's wishes but went on 11th November. We deem it impossible to withhold from Parliament basis of policy, and terms of announcement are studiously guarded as to time.

731 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 180.)

OSBORNE. *Jan. 5. 1881.*

The Queen in approving the Speech *generally*, commands the Ministers in Attendance to convey to the Cabinet her disapproval of *that part* of the Speech referring to Kandahar ; & the Queen *only* gives her assent to the Speech under the *express understanding* that the Cabinet will give her an assurance that, should circumstances arise rendering the retention of Kandahar desirable, the Government will not hesitate to continue to hold that position.

<sup>1</sup> Ministers in attendance on the Queen at Osborne.

<sup>2</sup> As to the revision of the Queen's Speech

732 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

Jan. 6. 1881.

Mr. Gladstone presents his humble duty to Your Majesty and reports to Your Majesty that, having seen General Ponsonby this afternoon, he will not trouble Your Majesty until Saturday on the subject of the Telegrams of yesterday; and General Ponsonby will probably have reported to Your Majesty that Mr. Gladstone hopes then to return a satisfactory answer to the letter which he had the honor to receive today, and which he observes is evidently intended for communication to the Cabinet. . . .

733 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 180-1.)

10, DOWNING STREET. WHITEHALL. 7 Jan. 1881.

Mr. Gladstone with his humble duty reports to Your Majesty that, in preference to waiting until Saturday, he has felt it to be more becoming that he should take the earliest opportunity of consulting his Colleagues at once on the point arising out of the terms of the Royal Speech which Your Majesty was pleased to state. He has accordingly done this today; and he is in a condition at once to report to Your Majesty that the Cabinet entirely accepts the view of Your Majesty and humbly assures Your Majesty that, should circumstances arise rendering the retention of Candahar desirable the Government will not hesitate to continue to hold that position.

Mr. Gladstone humbly adds the expression of his regret that Your Majesty should have been subjected to any degree of trouble or annoyance in this matter. Had he been aware that Your Majesty would feel any doubts on any portion of the Speech, he would have been most careful to arrange the business of the Cabinet in such a way that Your Majesty should have known the precise contents of the Speech submitted with a longer time for any necessary explanations.

734 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

OSBORNE. Jan. 8. 1881.

. . . The Queen has rec<sup>d</sup> with satisfaction the assurance conveyed thro' him on the subject of Candahar—as well as the

expression of his regret at the annoyance & trouble she was exposed to on Wednesday.—

The Queen did not, she must say, think Mr. Gladstone, who is so old a Servant of the Crown, would have wished to keep her in ignorance of so important a declaration—moreover not in consonance with her opinion of what was prudent—& Lord Hartington<sup>1</sup> has written to explain that it was his fault.—He is to show Mr. Gladstone her answer. The Queen is grieved to see that the tactics of Irish obstruction have already begun. Why should the opinion of the Chancellor<sup>2</sup> be overruled by that of the Law Officers. Surely his ought to go first? It does appear very unseemly that these dreadful Agitators who are under trial should be allowed to sit in the House of Commons.—

What will be done if they are not convicted?

**735**                    *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

*Private.*

OSBORNE. *Jan. 9. 1881.*

It may be worth while telling you that your letter to The Queen gave great satisfaction and that from what Her Majesty said to me last night she is evidently much pleased by it. She thinks the misunderstanding arose from Hartington's omission to tell her of the proposed announcement but he has himself written so well to her that I hope the matter may be considered at an end.

The Queen is much disturbed at the Irish obstruction in Parliament.

**736**                    *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

OSBORNE. *Jan. 10. 1881.*

The Queen hopes that all the Ministers will keep Her Majesty well informed on any subject of interest connected with their Departments.

*Endorsed:* Circulate.

**737**                    *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

(Partly printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 183.)

OSBORNE. *Jan. 10. 1881.*

The Queen commands me to ask if you can give her any information as to what you propose to do if the Irish Traversers are acquitted.

<sup>1</sup> Secretary for India.

<sup>2</sup> Lord Selborne.



And also whether you have any scheme for putting a stop to Obstruction in Parliament.

Her Majesty imagines that as this cannot be considered a party move you will probably communicate with the Leader of the Opposition so as to secure his support in any measure you introduce for this object. The Queen feels so much the loss of time and the wearing out of Statesmen that this system of obstruction causes, that she only wishes she could see some way of helping you in the matter.

P.S. I believe Her Majesty asked these questions before—as she said she expected you would have alluded to them in your letter to her. . . .

### 738 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

OSBORNE. Jan. 18. 1881.

I deeply regret to observe by Viceregal telegram of the 16th, how soon my warnings have become justified—

In protesting against the announcement of our retirement from Candahar (a move which you say is not to be effected if there is any necessity for remaining) I desired to avoid bloodshed, to save expenditure, and to prevent our declaring our intention of following a certain course, which we might not be ultimately able to fulfil. The effect of the announcement has been to create uneasiness, to necessitate the advance of an army towards the Helmund, and to alarm all our allies.

I should be glad to hear the opinion of the military officers on the present state of affairs at Candahar.

### 739 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

Jan. 18. 1881.

. . . Mr. Gladstone has communicated with Lord Hartington<sup>1</sup> on the subject of Your Majesty's telegram respecting Candahar, and Lord Hartington will not fail to write to Your Majesty waiting any report which may arrive from the Viceroy as the cause and character of the facts which have attracted Your Majesty's notice. Mr. Gladstone has not yet observed indications sufficient to enable him to judge whether the movement is of a local rather than a political character. He hopes this may be the case. . . .

<sup>1</sup> Secretary for India.

740 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*OSBORNE. *January 18-9. 1881.*

The Queen asks whether the Obstructionist Members would give way if threatened by a continuous sitting till the address is passed ?

741 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 184.)[*Telegram*]OSBORNE. *January 21. 1881.*

As the address has after [a] fortnight been voted I hope you will now act with great firmness and energy. The moment is surely come [to] show that Mr. Parnell's outrageous language cannot be permitted. When will the long talked of Coercion Bill so anxiously required by the Irish Government be brought in ?

742 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*[*Telegram*]22 *January. 1881.*

Glad to find by your letter just received that you held firm language about Transvaal. What is the nature of the measure you allude to for dealing with obstruction ?

743 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 185.)OSBORNE. *Jan. 25. 1881.*

The Queen thanks Mr. Gladstone for all his reports & is glad to see the firm tone taken by Mr. Forster<sup>1</sup> in the House of Commons, & the decided line intended to be taken by Mr. Gladstone & the Govt in case of obstruction.—

The Conservative Opposition have shown gt patriotism & a right sense of what is due to the Throne & Country in supporting the Govt at this most anxious moment.

The Queen hopes it may be possible to shut up Davitt. . . .

744 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*OSBORNE. *Feb. 1. 1881.*

The Queen thanks Mr. Gladstone for his full & regular reports of these dreadful debates.

<sup>1</sup> Chief Secretary.

Never was there such a state of things.—Surely something must be done to put down these shameless Home Rulers!

The Queen really w<sup>ld</sup> ask Mr. Gladstone not to write late at *night* when he must be much exhausted & agitated—but to write *next m<sup>s</sup>* (if he has been *late*) only sending her a short Telegram the same night w<sup>h</sup> will reach her early in the m<sup>s</sup>.—

The news of Sir G. Colley's repulse<sup>1</sup>—(*not* defeat) for the attack seems to have been most brilliant—has grieved the Queen deeply.

#### 745 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 189.)

10, DOWNING STREET, WHITEHALL. *2nd Feb.* [1881].

Mr. Gladstone presents his humble duty, and thanks Your Majesty for the gracious care in respect to his health and strength shown in the letter he has last had the honour to receive. Unhappily, the pressure of his morning business is such that, unless the work of the previous evening were cleared during the night, he could not find it possible to prepare himself for the general communications of the day. He is indeed but too well disposed to spare himself during the short period of work that yet remains to him, and he will feel encouraged in doing this by Your Majesty's kindness. . . .

746

#### *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

OSBORNE. *Feb. 4.* 1881.

The Queen thanks Mr. Gladstone for his full letters but especially for the vy interesting & long acc<sup>t</sup> of the extraordinary Scene last night & of the atrocious behaviour of those Irish Rebels w<sup>h</sup> she sees was written at 3 in the m<sup>s</sup>.

The insolence of saying the *Prime Minister* was "not to be heard" passes belief!

The Speaker seems indeed to have come out admirably on this occasion & the *result* of the Debate on Mr. Gladstone's resolutions is most satisfactory.

The Queen is extremely anxious abt it all & follows the acc<sup>ts</sup> with the g<sup>test</sup> interest.

Mr. Gladstone must be vy tired & much worried.

<sup>1</sup> At Laing's Nek, Jan. 28, 1881.

747 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 193)

OSBORNE. Feb. 9. 1881.

. . . She has read his Memorandum on the provisions of the forthcoming Irish Land Bill and is satisfied that the general tendency of the measure will be in favour of amending & *not* of *overthrowing existing* laws.

The Queen understands that Mr. Gladstone does *not* intend the new Law to interfere with contracts *willingly* made & adhered to between those who are *satisfied* with their positions, but in legislating for the cases where the parties differ.

The Queen *trusts* that *nothing* will be *proposed subversive* of the *rights of property*, that may be used as a *precedent* for *future* legislation *in England* where the existing conditions of land tenure *differ widely* from those in Ireland.

748 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

13 Feb. 1881.

If Mr. Parnell's movements can be ascertained, should he not be watched ?

749 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

OSBORNE. Feb. 14. 1881.

. . . She fears it will be impossible to satisfy all expectation & to settle all claims in the Irish Land Bill, but she relies with assurance on nothing being done to eliminate the loyal Irish from the British Rule & Govt.

Can the new Rules laid down by the Speaker not be used to expedite the passing of the Coercion Bill <sup>wh</sup> the Queen is glad to see is to be immediately followed by the Arms Bill ?—The language used by the Irish on Friday night & especially ag<sup>st</sup> Mr. Forster seemed to the Queen worse than ever.

Mr. Parnell's absence is strange. She trusts he is not enlisting foreign sympathy ?

The Queen is *vy vy* anxious ab<sup>t</sup> her troops in South Africa & thinks Sir G. Colley's position very critical. . . .

750 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

[Telegram]

[Feb. 15. 1881.]

Lord Kimberley<sup>1</sup> will telegraph to Your Majesty a message for Sir G. Colley in reply to communication from Kruger<sup>2</sup> to this Cabinet pray very early attention as it may save shedding of blood.

751 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 190-7.)

10, DOWNING STREET. WHITEHALL. Feb. 15. 1881.

Mr. Gladstone . . . reports to Your Majesty that the Cabinet assembled today for the purpose of considering what communication ought to be sent to South Africa in reply to a Telegram of the 13th from Sir Geo. Colley: which transmitted an overture or message from Krüger (written Kruner in the Telegram), apparently in reply to what he had heard through President Brand.<sup>3</sup> Viewing the likelihood of early and sanguinary actions, Lord Kimberley had made known to Mr. Gladstone his impression that the receipt of such a Telegram, at such a juncture, although its terms were inadmissible, rendered it a duty to examine the position and see whether it afforded any hope of settlement.

The result of the conversation in the Cabinet was embodied in a Telegram which they desire to send with all possible despatch to Sir Geo. Colley. Conflict probably imminent and much bloodshed may they hope be avoided by it. Mr. Gladstone has at once telegraphed in cipher to Your Majesty a brief account of this Telegram, and has mentioned its extreme urgency.

752 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. 20 February. 1881.

The Queen hopes that the Protection Bill will pass this week and that you will be able to dine here on Monday to celebrate her grandson's<sup>4</sup> marriage which takes place on Sunday the 27th at Berlin.

<sup>1</sup> Colonial Secretary.<sup>2</sup> President of the South African Republic.<sup>3</sup> President of the Orange Free State<sup>4</sup> Prince William of Germany, later Emperor William II.

753

*General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*WINDSOR CASTLE. *February 20. 1881.*

Your letter to The Queen confirmed what you had already told Her Majesty, that it was not intended to proceed immediately with the Arms Bill as so much pressing business required early attention.

The Queen regrets that your scheme for restoring order and protecting Life in Ireland is so far incomplete, but can understand the necessity of attending to other business. Her Majesty hopes that the Land Bill will not take the place of the Arms Bill but that English and Scotch requirements will now have their share of the time of Parliament.

It cannot be denied that the withdrawal of the Arms Bill after it was announced is to some extent a confession of weakness.

Perhaps this may be unavoidable here, but The Queen is anxious that no similar admission or appearance of hesitation should be shown in South Africa, as both coming at the same time though in different parts of the Empire would have a disastrous effect.

754 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

2 March. 1881.

Mr. Gladstone presents his humble duty to Your Majesty and humbly recommends the name of Sir Garnet Wolseley for the honour of a Peerage.

While the Military distinctions of Sir Garnet Wolseley are such as, Mr. Gladstone conceives, obviously bring him within just reach of this distinction, the grant of the honour at the present time is recommended by important public considerations. Opinion respecting Army questions has but limited vent in the House of Commons. In the House of Lords, with its more limited engagements, there is a greater freedom: but the opinion there represented almost from the necessity of the case is the opinion of the elder officers, and might almost be called that of a past generation. At present the only younger soldier of the House of Lords, who has seen service with responsibility, as Mr. Gladstone believes, is Lord Chelmsford, whose political and general associations naturally place him at a distance from the Administration. The early death of Lord Sandhurst defeated the intention with which

that nobleman was placed in the House of Lords, so far as it was a special intention. The Government deem it their duty to study the means of securing a fair exhibition from professional authority of what is to be said on behalf of the measures taken under their advice in relation to the Army, and it is with a view to the fullest and fairest elucidation practicable under the circumstances that they desire the addition of Sir G. Wolseley to the authorities already available.

On these grounds, thus roughly stated, Mr. Gladstone tenders his humble recommendation.

755

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone**Confidential.*WINDSOR CASTLE. *March 3. 1881.*

The Queen is glad to see that Mr. Gladstone is so much better & able to write himself,—

She has been *much* surprised by Mr. Gladstone's recommendation of Sir Garnet Wolseley for a Peerage !

His services, valuable as they have been, were rewarded on *several* occasions & there is *no* reason why the highest honour should be conferred upon him at this moment. He was last year appointed Quarter Master General of the Army when it was *expected* he w<sup>ld</sup> give a hearty & loyal *support* to the Commander in Chief,<sup>1</sup> for Mr. Gladstone will admit that in all Offices the subordinates must show respect to their head.—But Sir Garnet has *throughout* placed himself in open opposition to the Duke of Cambridge. *Though* holding an *Office* at *Headquarters* he has just *published* an article written in such a spirit that even *those*, who *agree* with his views *cannot* approve the . . . tone of his remarks.

Mr. Childers<sup>2</sup> in the House of Commons hinted that more reticence w<sup>ld</sup> have been desirable on the part of the Quarter Master Gen<sup>l</sup> : & the *general* feeling is one of surprise at the insubordination w<sup>h</sup> has been otherwise unnoticed. . . .

The Queen feels *sure* that Mr. Gladstone *cannot* have been aware of these circumstances. . . .

The Queen therefore desires to repeat *most emphatically* that she will *NOT approve* of a Peerage being conferred on Sir Garnet Wolseley.

<sup>1</sup> The Duke of Cambridge.

<sup>2</sup> Secretary for War.

756 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*DOWNING STREET. *March 4. 1881.*

Mr. Gladstone acknowledges, with his humble thanks and duty, Your Majesty's gracious reference to his recent accident, from the effects of which he has virtually ceased to suffer. On Monday he hopes to resume full duty in Parliament, including his daily reports to Your Majesty.

With reference to his recommendation of Sir Garnet Wolseley for a Peerage, he humbly agrees with Your Majesty that such a promotion is not required as a new mark of acknowledgment for that General's military services. Your Majesty will, however, have observed that this recommendation has been submitted with a view to the attainment of a great public object, namely improved means for full and enlightened discussion on military subjects in one of the Houses of Parliament.

If Your Majesty is aware of any facts, shewing a want of loyal subordination to his office to his immediate superior the Commander in Chief, such facts would of course powerfully bear upon the recommendation submitted by Mr. Gladstone and would also be at once noticed by the Minister for War. But at present neither that Minister nor Mr. Gladstone are possessed of any information bearing such a character.

For official persons to make use either of the press, with or without their names, or of speeches at public celebrations for the purpose of speaking unofficially on questions connected with their Departments is a practice doubtless open to remark. But it prevails widely, and especially in regard to the Army; and this too, chiefly, as far as Mr. Gladstone has observed, on the part of those who conscientiously disapprove, in whole or in part, of the changes introduced in and since 1871. This being so, it would be difficult for Your Majesty's ministers, who are deeply responsible for these changes, to treat it as an offence on the part of Sir G. Wolseley that he should have made use of his pen, and this without the suppression of his name, to defend them.

Mr. Childers assures Mr. Gladstone that, in referring to public declarations of this class, he carefully avoided any kind of reference to Sir G. Wolseley's productions in particular.

Since receiving Your Majesty's letter, Mr. Gladstone has attentively perused a most able and comprehensive paper by Sir G.



Wolseley in the March number of the *XIX<sup>th</sup> Century*. Without doubt this paper must be open to criticism from various points of view ; and Mr. Gladstone's opinion of it can in any case be but of small value. But it would be disingenuous on his part to conceal his impression that the paper is conceived in a spirit of complete loyalty to authority, and with a single-minded desire to promote the better comprehension and appreciation of recent changes in the Army.

Mr. Gladstone humbly tenders these cursory references to Your Majesty's letter, in the hope that they may tend further to elucidate the subject. It is one of importance. Mr. Gladstone has had means of appreciating the public sentiment, and the sentiment of the House of Commons, on the subject of alterations, which have aimed at the elevation of the Army as an institution and profession, and at impressing on it a character yet more widely national ; and he would view with apprehension the probable effects of any well-founded beliefs in or out of Parliament, that Your Majesty's advisers had failed in their duty both to secure for these costly reforms every opportunity of a full and fair hearing in the House of Parliament, and until they are shewn to have been injurious, to defend them.

757

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*WINDSOR CASTLE. *March 4. 1881.*

. . . She required no assurance from Mr. Gladstone of his desire to improve the Army & to provide for full discussion on the reforms proposed by Mr. Childers but she *cannot allow* that the *profession* would look with satisfaction on the promotion of Sir Garnet Wolseley to a Peerage & feels *certain* that the merits of the alterations made in 1871 can be far better discussed by some *able & temperate* Officer who has *not* taken the part which Sir Garnet *has* taken *against* his *superiors*. . . .

Mr. Gladstone admits that he is *not* aware of the General's *want* of loyal subordination & the Queen is *confident* that this must be the case, or he *wld never* have made this submission, to her, of which she *must emphatically refuse* her *approval*.

758 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*10, DOWNING STREET. WHITEHALL. *5 March. 1881.*

Mr. Gladstone has had the honour to receive Your Majesty's letter of yesterday evening ; and thanks Your Majesty for having

put clearly and strongly the case with regard to Sir Garnet Wolseley, which will he thinks much contribute to its elucidation.

The important public purpose, in view of which Mr. Gladstone has humbly recommended raising Sir Garnet Wolseley to the House of Lords, is met by Your Majesty with a consideration not less weighty from the opposite quarter; this namely that he is guilty of insubordination towards His Royal Highness the Commander in Chief.

Had this observation related to matters within Your Majesty's personal sphere, Mr. Gladstone would not have been so forgetful of his duty as even to appear to question it for a moment by proposing any further step.

But, as it refers to an offence of the Quarter Master General against the Commander in Chief, and as that offence bears upon his fitness, not only for the Peerage, but for the office he actually holds, Mr. Gladstone proposes, with the permission of Your Majesty, to request the Secretary of State for War to make known to the Commander in Chief what has occurred, together with the serious view which Your Majesty's advisers take of any disloyalty or insubordination on the part of a high military functionary towards one, who, besides being higher still, is nearly related to Your Majesty.

The Commander in Chief will then be able to make known the whole facts, upon which any needful communications may be made to Sir Garnet Wolseley: so that either the difficulty which has presented itself to Your Majesty's view will be removed, or Your Majesty's advisers will have to recognise an insurmountable obstacle in the way of their attaining an important public object.

759

*General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*WINDSOR CASTLE. *March 8. 1881.*

I have repeated to The Queen the substance of my conversation with you yesterday and I have also reported to Her Majesty Mr. Childers' opinion of Sir Garnet Wolseley.

Her Majesty is glad to find that he did not think Sir Garnet could be justly accused of the slightest disloyalty to his chiefs and The Queen entirely accepts Mr. Childers' opinion on this subject.

But The Queen cannot think this a favorable moment for conferring so high a distinction on Sir Garnet Wolseley and must

therefore for the present ask you not to submit his name for a Peerage.

760 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to General Ponsonby*

10, DOWNING STREET. WHITEHALL. 9 *March*. 1881.

I am very glad to find that Her Majesty's mind is satisfied as to the conduct of Sir G. Wolseley in his official position ; as also that Her Majesty will have understood, through you, how completely my submission was dissociated from any idea that he was expected in that capacity to interfere with the official responsibility and province of the Duke of Cambridge.

You will perceive, in respect to the wish which Her Majesty has now graciously expressed, that this difficulty arises : what is to happen if a motion be made in the House of Lords say in a fortnight or three weeks for bringing the authority and professional weight of that House to bear in an adverse manner upon the present military system. Her Majesty, with her strong sense of public duty, will not think we, from our point of view, could be justified in exposing great national interests to unnecessary hazard. I need not say it is not in our power to regulate the time when an adverse motion may be made.

If we could by any means have seen our way on this point I should have mentioned that it will before long, say at Easter, be my duty to submit to Her Majesty a small number of names for Peerages. One name, that of Lord Reay, has already been sent to me by Her Majesty's command. It might be more acceptable to Her Majesty that Sir G. Wolseley's name should be included in this list, than that he should be placed in a conspicuous position by an isolated honour.

On various occasions Her Majesty, in the exercise of an undoubted right, when disposed to question the judgment of the Prime Minister, has desired to know the sentiments of the Cabinet, and has commanded some expression of her own views to be laid before them. I have not in the present instance suggested such a course, nor is it for me to do so, though I should I need hardly say cheerfully obey any instructions of Her Majesty on this subject.

As I have referred to the Cabinet, I may mention that in this, as in all matters touching the House of Lords in particular, I have from the first acted in consultation with Lord Granville.

761 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

11th March, 1881.

Let me call your attention to Transvaal news in the *Standard*. We must not give way to Boer demands, and after three defeats must be very cautious in our dealings with the rebels.

762 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

[Telegram]

[March 11. 1881.]

Will state in House today that rumours as to bases of peace or arrangement are premature and groundless.

763 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. March 16. 1881.

The Queen thanks Mr. Gladstone for his expressions of sympathy on this dreadful occasion.<sup>1</sup>—She has felt the shock very much, & such horrible attempts when they succeed have a most painful effect on Society—& encourage other attempts.

The Queen is glad to see the feeling created in Parlt & in the Country generally—but she trusts that the Police will be very watchful & keep an eye on the horrible foreigners we have in this Country.—Should not any manufacture or rather necessary sale of bombs of this horrible nature be prohibited or put under controul like the sale of poisons—she believes are ?

764 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. March 16. 1881.

After a very careful consideration of your proposal that Sir Garnet Wolseley, The Quarter Master General, should be made a peer, The Queen has come to the conclusion that this promotion would be very unwise and Her Majesty therefore commands me to express her regret that she must revert to her former request and ask you not to submit his name for this honor.

I explained to The Queen what you had said—that there would be no political significance in his promotion, that Sir Garnet would in no way represent the Government in the House of Lords and that conditions might be imposed on him which would prevent his assuming any position incompatible with his relations to the Commander in Chief. But The Queen could not admit that the

<sup>1</sup> Assassination of Czar Alexander III.

appearance of Sir G. Wolseley in the House of Lords would not be a reflection on the Duke of Cambridge, but on the contrary is certain that His Royal Highness would feel he could scarcely with due respect to his office continue to retain the command of the Army.

If Sir Garnet were to cease to hold his appointment as Quarter Master General the case would be different, or if you had proposed to promote Sir John Adye<sup>1</sup> who holds a political office and who is not immediately under the Commander in Chief, she would be glad to take this into consideration. But The Queen is convinced that the conferring of a Peerage on Sir Garnet Wolseley while he is Q.M. General would be detrimental to the good feeling which should exist at the Head Quarters of the Army and would be a dangerous precedent by converting the office into a political one, so that The Queen regrets she can not approve of the promotion.

765

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

17 March. [1881.]

Am sorry your telegram of the 15th was sent to Sir E. Wood<sup>2</sup> before it was submitted to me. Cannot understand any surrender to Boer demands which this implies.

766 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to General Ponsonby*

March 18. 1881.

While considering, as I intended, the letter received from you last night I observe that Her Majesty is under the impression that Sir Garnet Wolseley if raised to the House of Lords would be a political officer.

I can give the most positive assurance that he would in no sense, and in no degree be a political officer.

The test of a political officer is that he comes in and goes out with the Government. Sir Garnet Wolseley has not come in and would not go out with it.

The Commander in Chief is not a political officer, and yet he has a certain approach to the character because he speaks for the Government in matters of Army discipline. Sir Garnet Wolseley

<sup>1</sup> Surveyor-General of Ordnance, *b.* 1819

<sup>2</sup> Commander-in-Chief in South Africa in succession to Sir G. Colley, killed at Majuba, Feb. 27, 1881.

would not have this office in any way belonging to him, and thus would not have any semblance of being a political officer.

But further, if he were to be a political officer, I certainly could not recommend his elevation to the House of Lords. Her Majesty graciously offers a Peerage for Sir John Adye. This would give to the military system now prevailing able and professional support. But the object which is aimed at by my recommendation is to obtain support which shall be not only able and professional, but independent. This of course could not be gained by the elevation of Sir John Adye : for whom we greatly desire a seat in the House of Commons.

I would hope that this explanation may like some former ones be graciously received by Her Majesty.

I apprehend that, if it be thought needful, there could be no difficulty in defining, by a note or memorandum for clearer understanding, the exact relation to the Commander in Chief in the House of Lords.

767

*General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. *March 19. 1881.*

. . . Her Majesty is glad to find that you agree with her in thinking his elevation to the Peerage would be inadvisable if he were to become a political officer. But The Queen will ask you to consider whether the elevation as now proposed will not convert him into one. The avowed object of his having a seat in the House of Lords is to enable him to controvert the arguments urged by the opposition against the Ministerial Army Scheme. In the very improbable but not absolutely impossible event of a change of Government taking place on this question, the new administration would of course remove him from his office as a political opponent.

The Commander in Chief and his Staff form a Military Unity which must sound no uncertain note as regards the Army and the only voice which can speak on Military matters from this body with any authority is that of the Commander in Chief.

No doubt Sir Garnet Wolseley could give able and professional support to the Army measures brought forward by Mr. Childers<sup>1</sup> but it would not, as long as he held the office of Quarter Master General, be independent support as you desire.

<sup>1</sup> Secretary for War.

Nor would it be just to him nor fair to the plan he upholds that he should be restricted in his arguments in its favour by any rules imposed by a memorandum defining his position.

The Queen hopes that you will agree with her that it would be far better for all concerned that Sir Garnet should cease to hold the office he does on the Commander in Chief's Staff before he is recommended for a Peerage.

768 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to General Ponsonby*

10, DOWNING STREET. WHITEHALL. *March 21. 1881.*

I am unwilling to trouble you again on the facts of the Wolseley case; but I think that, in your letter of the 19th account is not taken of a distinction, which I regard as clear and fundamental, between the official duties of a Quarter Master General (the same applying to a Commander in Chief) and his opinion or action on military questions in general.

We have never looked to Sir G. Wolseley as a person pledged to support whatever the Government might propose, but as one friendly to the established principle of the important changes sanctioned in the time of the ministry of 1871. He might on any question arising take a different view from ours, as Lord Sandhurst did while holding a paid appointment, and he would be as independent as any other Peer, wholly therefore, I conceive beyond any question of dismissal for a proper and conscientious expression of opinion.

The written understanding to which I referred had reference simply to *official* matters in which the Commander in Chief would be the regular organ of the Government not to military questions at large.

I am sure that, when you say the Commander in Chief and his staff form a military unity, you mean on these official matters, and do not mean that on all questions relating to the Army the Quarter Master General or other functionaries are only to think and speak with the Commander in Chief of the day. What reserves good sense and good tact may require is another matter, and one I think not difficult of practical adjustment: this principle applies probably to the Commander in Chief also, whose relation to the Government has never been found to present a problem incapable of solution.

769 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*WINDSOR CASTLE. *March 22. 1881.*

The Queen has read Mr. Gladstone's letter of the 21st with respect to Sir Garnet Wolseley.—

She regrets she is quite unable to take the same view that Mr. Gladstone does of the effect that would be caused by placing the Quarter Master General in the House of Lords.

The Queen therefore trusts he will *not* press this request any further.

But in *compliance* with *Mr. Gladstone's wishes* the Queen wld be ready to create Sir G. Wolseley a Peer—if he retires from the Head Quarter Staff of the Army.

770 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*10, DOWNING STREET. WHITEHALL. *March 22. 1881.*

Mr. Gladstone reports . . . that the Cabinet was gathered at short notice to-day to consider Sir E. Wood's important Telegram<sup>1</sup> of this morning: as to which Lord Kimberley<sup>2</sup> had already addressed a communication to Your Majesty.

The Cabinet had no doubt of the duty and necessity of approving the proceedings of Sir E. Wood: and also of acknowledging the services of President Brand,<sup>3</sup> and paying a merited tribute to Sir Evelyn Wood.

The Cabinet separated before four, with much anxiety to receive Your Majesty's reply as it will be very difficult, perhaps hardly possible, to avoid stating or implying the view of Your Majesty's Advisers in answer to questions almost sure to be put in Parliament before five o'clock. Should this be so Your Majesty will, Mr. Gladstone is certain, understand that Lord Kimberley and he have acted only under a sense of the necessity of the case, to avoid public excitement or misgiving.

771 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 207-8.)OSBORNE. *April 7. 1881.*

The Queen has to acknowledge Mr. Gladstone's letter enclosing one from the Duke of Argyll tendering his resignation.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> As to peace with the Boers.<sup>2</sup> Colonial Secretary.<sup>3</sup> President of the Orange Free State.<sup>4</sup> As Lord Privy Seal



She is sorry for this & especially that it sh<sup>d</sup> be on the subject of the Irish Land Bill.—The Queen fears that this is not to be as moderate as she was at first led to hope.

If so—it will again meet with, she fears, great opposition in the House of Lords. Can Mr. Gladstone not modify some of the Clauses wh—if the Duke of Argyll feels so strongly ag<sup>t</sup> them are sure to meet with strong opposition from many other Peers, Liberal as well as Conservative? . . .

772

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

OSBORNE. April 16. 1881.

. . . The Queen has seen with pleasure that Mr. Gladstone takes an interest in that dreadful subject of vivisection in wh she has done all she c<sup>d</sup> & she earnestly hopes that Mr. Gladstone will take an opportunity of speaking strongly against a practice wh is a disgrace to humanity & Christianity.

She remembers well Mr. Gladstone speaking to her some years ago ag<sup>t</sup> the killing of Calves & lambs & she has often thought since what a good thing it w<sup>d</sup> be if this view c<sup>d</sup> be carried out. At any rate cruelty in the killing of animals for food—ought to be made illegal.

The news from the Transvaal are vy unsatisfactory.

The Queen trusts Mr. Gladstone will urge on Lord Kimberley to be vy firm & *not* to let the Peace be carried out *unless* EVERY condition is firmly adhered to by the Boers.—

The Peace itself is felt so generally to be so painful & humiliating in many ways, that we must not go a step farther & let ourselves be deceived.

Already what Sir E. Wood, before he went out—told the Queen, seems likely to come true, viz: “that he was certain if we gave it up now we sh<sup>d</sup> have to reoccupy in a few years.”

773

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

OSBORNE. 20 April. 1881.

Though I think it will be declined a public funeral ought at once to be offered to the relations and friends of the great statesman<sup>1</sup> whom the country has just lost. I am in deep grief at this irreparable loss of a most devoted and valued friend.

<sup>1</sup> Lord Beaconsfield died, April 19, 1881.

774 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 212-13.)

HAWARDEN. April 20. 1881.

Mr. Gladstone . . . had fully anticipated the feeling with which Your Majesty has received the sad intelligence of the death of Lord Beaconsfield.

Occasions, like this, of deep and touching national interest are, in Mr. Gladstone's view, governed by general rules, entirely beyond the reach of the controversies which belong to differences between political parties.

Mr. Gladstone would not seek, nor could he earn, Your Majesty's regard by dissembling the amount or character of the separation between Lord Beaconsfield and himself. But it does not in any degree blind him to the extraordinary powers of the deceased statesman, or to many remarkable qualities, in regard to whom Mr. Gladstone, well aware of his own marked inferiority, can only desire to profit by a great example.

Mr. Gladstone has this afternoon a Telegram from Lord Rowton<sup>1</sup> which leads him to expect an early answer to the overture he has made.

P.S. Mr. Gladstone has received, before the post hour, the negative reply from the Executors, which Your Majesty had in some degree led him to anticipate.

775 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

OSBORNE. April 21-22. 1881.

The Queen has to acknowledge Mr. Gladstone's letter of the 20 for which she thanks him sincerely.

She feels the loss of dear Lord Beaconsfield who was such a very devoted & kind personal friend of hers—as well as so wise a councillor—so *very deeply*—& knows it to be so irreparable to herself—that she can hardly trust herself to speak or write upon it.

The Queen therefore hardly likes to touch on what Mr. Gladstone alludes to, viz: the difference between him & Lord Beaconsfield—for she felt much that relates to that keenly & painfully.

But she rejoices to see that he appreciates the great qualities

<sup>1</sup> Private Secretary to Lord Beaconsfield.

of the departed Statesman—who will be more & more valued & missed as time goes on. The universal feeling shown on the occasion when party strife is hushed as Mr. Gladstone observes is *vy gratifying*.

His wish to rest by his devoted wife, & for a simple funeral can only add to the feeling of respect for his memory.

776 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. *April 30. 1881.*

. . . She is *vy glad* that it is decided to arrest Mr. Dillon & wishes it were possible to arrest Mr. Parnell also. The Queen fears the Land Bill is causing great alarm. Lord Cowper<sup>1</sup> gives a *vy bad acct* of the prospects in Ireland.

777 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

DOWNING STREET. *May 4. 1881.*

. . . Mr. Gladstone, having learned with regret that dissatisfaction exists, among many Parliamentary adherents of the Government, with the proposal to erect a Public Monument to Lord Beaconsfield, mentioned the subject in the Cabinet, that Ministers might be prepared for the expression of differences of opinion, and for the absence of many members, including some gentlemen not commonly esteemed to be of pronounced opinions. The Cabinet did not in any manner dissent from the propriety of the proposal itself. . . .

778 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

*5th May. 1881.*

. . . In an early part of the evening, Mr. Gladstone gave notice of the words of the motion respecting a monument to Lord Beaconsfield to be made on Monday. He hears somewhat improved accounts of the probable reception of the motion by the sections of the House from whom serious opposition has been apprehended.

779 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

BUCKINGHAM PALACE. *May 6. 1881.*

The Queen thanks Mr. Gladstone for his 2 last letters & is sorry to hear of his continued indisposition.

<sup>1</sup> Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland.

The Debate in the House of Commons on the Vote of thanks to the Generals & Army in India is vy much regretted.

It is vy ungrateful towards a man like Sir F. Roberts & to so many brave men under him.

The Queen is glad to hear that the opposition to the proposal for a monument to so great a Statesman as Lord Beaconsfield is not likely to be of a considerable nature.

She trusts Mr. Gladstone will be well enough to make it in person.

### 780 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

May 9-10. 1881.

Mr. Gladstone . . . reports that after several scores of questions had been put and disposed of at the opening of business, he made the intended proposal for a monument at the public charge to Lord Beaconsfield. He was followed by Sir S. Northcote . . . Mr. Gladstone had offered a special intreaty against a lengthened controversial debate ; and fortunately the whole was concluded within an hour. On a division the vote was carried by a majority of 380 to 54. . . .

In reply to a preliminary question, Mr. Gladstone had explained that the inscription, which might and ought to be placed upon the monument, would be governed in its terms by the language in which Parliament had voted it.

The matter, as Mr. Gladstone hopes, may now be regarded as settled, and with quite as satisfactory an incident as, after a period of such sharp contention, he had ventured to hope. . . .

### 781 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. May 10. 1881.

The Queen hastens to thank Mr. Gladstone for his letter recd. this Inst.—

She has this Inst. read Mr. Gladstone's speech on the proposal for the Monument to the memory of her departed friend—& the great statesman—Lord Beaconsfield—& she wishes to express to him that she has been *much gratified* by it, and by the tribute he has paid to the great qualities of Lord Beaconsfield. Sir Stafford Northcote's speech is very fine and must have pleased Mr. Gladstone.

But apart from this Mr. Gladstone has vindicated the position of Parlt. by not permitting party feeling to prevent the just Public tribute to the Memory of great Statesmen being rendered.

She *knows* (and can *judge* by her own feelings) that Lord Beaconsfield's friends are *very* much gratified by Mr. Gladstone's fine speech, which will abound greatly to his honour.

She hopes he is better & will not stay up too late at the House.

782 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

May 10, 1881.

. . . Mr. Gladstone has had the honor thankfully to receive Your Majesty's gracious letter on the proceedings of yesterday ; and he rejoices that his endeavour to discharge without untruthfulness a duty not free from difficulty should have been crowned by Your Majesty's approval.

783 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. May 11, 1881.

The Queen desires me to mention to you that she was sorry to observe that neither Mr. Bright<sup>1</sup> nor Mr. Chamberlain<sup>2</sup> nor Sir Charles Dilke<sup>3</sup> voted for the Monument.

784 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to General Ponsonby*

May 12, 1881.

I had not noticed the omissions from the Division list, which you have been instructed to name : not indeed having referred to the list at all.

As regards members of the Government not in the Cabinet, I think a single case of absence, in circumstances where individual votes were unimportant, would not according to usual practice be taken account of. In *strictness*, however, leave ought to be asked.

Undoubtedly members of the Cabinet are bound to vote in every case—apart from accidental absences.

I think it likely that the two ministers you name may have deemed themselves too sharply committed, by declarations touching Lord Beaconsfield as contra-distinguished from his policy, to make it suitable for them to vote.

<sup>1</sup> Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster

<sup>2</sup> President of the Board of Trade.

<sup>3</sup> Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs.

There is no doubt that the case was a peculiar one, without any precedent covering the whole breadth of it.

It was also one in which circumstances made it proper for me to arrive at a decision without waiting for the re-assembling of my Colleagues : and the rule I have stated as to the obligations of Cabinet Ministers has for its correlation the supposition that they have been parties to the discussion of the subject in the Cabinet.

785

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. May 18. 1881.

The Queen . . . wishes now to mention a distinction of a personal nature which w<sup>ld</sup> be in accordance with precedent. When Mr. Canning died—his wife was made a Viscountess in her own right. When Sir Rob<sup>t</sup> Peel died a similar honour was offered to his widow—w<sup>h</sup> she declined.—The Queen knows that Mr. Ralph Disraeli<sup>1</sup> w<sup>ld</sup> much wish for a Baronetcy in connection with the property of Hughenden which is to be his Son's.—The Queen has little doubt that Mr. Gladstone will have no difficulty in doing what the Queen proposes—as it is in strict accordance with precedent that some dignity sh<sup>ld</sup> be offered to the heir or widow (who does not exist) of a former Prime Minister. They expect no more than a Baronetcy.

The Queen trusts Mr. Gladstone is better.

786 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

May 18. 1881.

Mr. Gladstone has the honor to acknowledge, with his humble duty, Your Majesty's letter of this day, and to thank Your Majesty for the gracious inquiry about his health, to which he is able to reply that he has every expectation of being able to attend the House of Commons tomorrow.

With regard to Your Majesty's suggestion that a Baronetcy should be granted in connection with the inheritance of the estate of Hughenden from Lord Beaconsfield, Mr. Gladstone will certainly not oppose himself to Your Majesty's wish. . . . sty'

<sup>1</sup> Lord Beaconsfield's younger brother.

787 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

DOWNING STREET. May 21. 1881.

. . . He now hopes that Your Majesty may be graciously pleased to approve the recommendation of Sir Garnet Wolsley for a peerage, submitted by him on what he believes his colleagues agree with him in deeming to be solid grounds of public policy.

788 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

BALMORAL CASTLE. May 22. 1881.

. . . The Queen is glad to perceive that the Cabinet will reconsider those points of the Irish Land Bill which Mr. Gladstone thinks are doubtful or dangerous.

The clauses wh<sup>h</sup> apparently confiscate a Landlord's property or reduce his interest in his own Land sh<sup>ld</sup> be very *carefully* raised.

To do justice to the Tenants is right, but if this is done at the expense of the innocent Landlord, the feeling of insecurity wh<sup>h</sup> exists in Ireland will be increased & capital, wh<sup>h</sup> is so much wanted there will fly *from* instead of *to* that Country.

The Queen fears that the state of Ireland *at present* is rapidly growing worse & she is *very* anxious for more information on this point.

The Queen does not understand the nature of the Motion relating to Scotch business but she thinks Mr. Gladstone will agree with her that *too* much time is *not* given to the questions brought forward by [the] Scotch themselves.

789 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

BALMORAL CASTLE. May 23. 1881.

The Queen was sorry to receive Mr. Gladstone's letter reopening the question of Sir Garnet Wolseley's peerage as she had *hoped* her arguments would have had their due weight & she thought that the recent<sup>d</sup> discussion in the House of Lords proved there was no reason to apprehend serious opposition to the Army reforms from the distinguished Officers in that house, although they may properly criticize the details.—Indeed the Queen w<sup>ld</sup> ~~rather~~ expect that the introduction of Sir Garnet Wolseley to that <sup>r of the</sup> body will *provoke* the opposition wh<sup>h</sup> it is desired to overcome. <sup>retary to</sup> Queen is not *sure* whether Mr. Gladstone is *aware* that she

does *not* object to conferring a *Peerage* on Sir Garnet, but *not as Quarter Master General*.—The Duke of Cambridge, to whom Mr. Gladstone alludes, while expressing a hope that his position & feelings should not be a barrier to any arrangement that may be made *repeats* that he *cannot* change his opinion :—that to make the Q<sup>r</sup> Master General a *Peer* as is *now* proposed, w<sup>ld</sup> be to make that *Office* a *political* one.—

Mr. Gladstone does not allude to the suggestion made by the Queen, to create Sir Neville Chamberlain<sup>1</sup> a *Peer*. He is a distinguished officer holding no official appointment who heartily supports most of the Military reforms proposed by the Government.

The independent professional support required w<sup>ld</sup> thus be provided.

Mr. Gladstone defines the position of the Commander in Chief in the House of Lords accurately. He is *not* a *political* personage & does not speak on political questions. But if the *Quarter Master General* is sent to the Upper House for the *express purpose* of advocating this *Ministerial* measure, he becomes thereby a *political* Officer.—

The Queen fully agrees with Mr. Gladstone that it w<sup>ld</sup> not be just to *exclude* Peers from holding appointments on the Head Quarter Staff,—& she has no desire to do so *as long* as they take *no prominent* part in *political* discussions. The Queen w<sup>ld</sup>, as an instance, object to Ld Chelmsford & Ld Longford for this reason, but w<sup>ld</sup> *not* object to Lord Howe.

Mr. Gladstone must not think the Queen urges her objections to this proposal from any luke warmness as regards the measure of Army reform, a measure she is *convinced* will *not* suffer from the want of the Quarter Master G<sup>l</sup>'s support ; but because she is so ENTIRELY CONVINCED that the *introduction* of the *political* element into the *offices* of the *Horse Guards* will be *fraught* with *SERIOUS danger* to the *Army* & to the *Constitution*.

790 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 219.)

DOWNING STREET. May 23. 1881.

Mr. Gladstone with his humble duty tenders to Your Majesty his hearty congratulations on the return of Your Majesty'

<sup>1</sup> B. 1820.



Birthday tomorrow: congratulations, he presumes to assure Your Majesty, in no way weakened by his regrets that he should be himself the instrument from time to time of so greatly burdening Your Majesty's time and mind with his communications. He earnestly hopes, with the entire country, that Your Majesty's life may be prolonged through many and happy years.

791 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

May 25. 1881.

Mr. Gladstone with his humble duty acknowledges Your Majesty's gracious letter of the 23rd which reached him yesterday morning. He has presumed to take a day for reflection before replying to it.

He feels that it would be unseemly were he further to enlarge on the case of Sir G. Wolseley, or to give Your Majesty occasion to resume the discussion of it.

He ought however to state that in the view of Your Majesty's Government Sir Neville Chamberlain is an officer of the highest merit. But he has not been conversant with the series of questions and measures of late years, vitally affecting the organisation of the British Army; and his being made a Peer would therefore fail to meet the main end in view.

And further that, to the best of Mr. Gladstone's knowledge Sir Garnet Wolseley has not at any time taken a prominent part, he might even say any part, in political discussion: and that his opinions, though in a general sense liberal, are of the most reserved and moderate cast.

Mr. Gladstone is notwithstanding sensible that, after a rather prolonged correspondence, he cannot feel assured that these circumstances will so weigh with Your Majesty as to give full satisfaction.

On the other hand, he finds himself compelled by what appears to him his public duty, humbly to adhere to the recommendation he has had the honour to submit.

- Q At the same time, should it be the desire of Your Majesty, he is prepared in deference to Your Majesty to withhold it until the siness of the year is further advanced.

792 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 219-20.)

BALMORAL CASTLE. May 25. 1881.

The Queen has to thank Mr. Gladstone for a very kind letter on the occasion of her now somewhat ancient birthday.

The aff<sup>te</sup> loyalty of her subjects is vy gratifying to her.—Her constant object, which only increases with years—is the welfare, prosperity, honour & glory of her dear Country.—

But the work & anxiety weigh heavily on her unsustained by the strong arm & loving advice of Him who now 19½ years ago was taken to a higher & better World !

793 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

BALMORAL. May 29. 1881.

The Queen is glad that the question of Sir Garnet Wolseley's peerage is to be deferred, but she hopes this may be altogether, as Her Majesty fears she cannot change the opinion she has expressed upon the subject.

794 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

10, DOWNING STREET, WHITEHALL. May 31. 1881.

Mr. Gladstone, with his humble duty, apprises Your Majesty that having observed Your Majesty's desire that Mr. Böhm should be chosen to execute the monument to Lord Beaconsfield voted by Parliament, and finding that the matter may be said to be within his own discretion, he has with much satisfaction apprised Mr. Lefevre<sup>1</sup> that he may communicate with Mr. Böhm on the subject of preparing a suitable design.

795 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

BALMORAL CASTLE. June 1. 1881.

Mr. Gladstone's report of the Cabinet proceedings on the 28th ult ; as regards the Transvaal have caused the Queen *deep* regret.

This Exhibition of weakness as it will be considered by Boers & natives, will have an unfortunate effect in South Africa & lead to the troubles wh<sup>h</sup> all are anxious to avoid.

<sup>1</sup> First Commissioner of Works.

The Boers had agreed as a return for our readiness to accept their conditions, that this strip of Country sh<sup>ld</sup> *remain in our hands*.

The inhabitants of that strip, if *any, who disliked our rule* could have gone to Boerland while the *loyal whites* who are *now* to be abandoned would have occupied this district & thereby placed themselves as a barrier between the Boers & the Zulus & Savages.

Recognising our determination the Boers w<sup>ld</sup> have settled down on their farms &c & the Natives w<sup>ld</sup> have had confidence in us.—Now alas! the Queen fears, that hesitating counsels will encourage the Agitators & that more demands will be made, while the *Natives* losing *all faith in our firmness of purpose* will *never* cease to give us trouble—& there will be fresh wars—more expense—& above all more precious lives lost!

796

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

BALMORAL CASTLE. June 4. 1881.

The Queen is glad to hear that Mr. Böhm is to execute the Monument of Ld. Beaconsfield for Westminster Abbey. . . .

797

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 222-3.)

BALMORAL CASTLE. June 15. 1881.

The Queen thanks Mr. Gladstone for his letters of yesterday & the day before. She is glad that measures are being taken to bring this monstrous language of the Irish Rebel Fenians before the United States Govt as it is *not right* to say the very least to allow such things to be published in a Country professing friendship for Great Britain & on friendly terms with her.

It is worse than the *Freiheit*,<sup>1</sup> as the excitement to assassination is more *positively* directed against *persons whose names are given*. Why sh<sup>ld</sup> the Prince of Wales be particularly pointed out;—& not herself—or is the Queen *also* condemned?

In *America generally* she is a *g<sup>t</sup> favourite* she knows. The P<sup>ce</sup> of Wales's people sh<sup>ld</sup> be warned & he himself—to be careful (w<sup>h</sup> he is not) into what company he goes.—

Mr. Gladstone, the Queen trusts will also be careful.

<sup>1</sup> A German Communist paper recently prosecuted in London.

The doubt abt the *Dotterel*<sup>1</sup> & the boast of O'Donovan Rossa as well as the tacit agreement of Mr. Parnell in these horrible ideas & practices—taken together with what happened at Liverpool—are vy *disagreeable* circumstances ;—as even if they are *not* true—they will keep us in constant anxiety.

The Queen is also vy glad to see that Instructions are to be given to warn the people in Ireland that the Troops & Constabulary will be ordered to fire upon them in case of necessity.

The question of the Troops was becoming not only vy trying & painful to themselves but also almost ridiculous considering the number there are now in Ireland, & calculated to give a false impression of our power & intentions.

The Queen leaves Balmoral on the 21st.—The weather is vy fine—but too dry.

### 798 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

HOUSE OF COMMONS. *June 20-1, 1881. 1½ a.m.*

Mr. Gladstone . . . before mentioning the proceedings of Parliament this day, offers his hearty and dutiful congratulations on the completion of the 44th year of Your Majesty's happy reign. That reign has now approached within a few months the length of the great reign of Queen Elizabeth: and Mr. Gladstone humbly prays that the reign of Your Majesty while exceeding the former one in length may ever stand associated with it in regard to the glory and happiness of the Empire and its people. . . .

### 799 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. *June 22. 1881.*

The Queen has to thank Mr. Gladstone for his kind letter on her accession day. Forty four years is a *long long* time to have worn a Crown with many thorns from the age of *just* 18 and heavy has been the burden she has borne & wh<sup>h</sup> seems only to increase as time goes on.

The happiness of her people & the glory of her dear Country have ever been & ever will be the dearest objects of her life !

<sup>1</sup> H.M. sloop *Dotterel* blew up in the Straits of Magellan, April 26, 1881.

800 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*HOUSE OF COMMONS. *June 27-8. 1881. 1 a.m.*

. . . Mr. Gladstone has the honor herewith to submit for Your Majesty's inspection the tract on Monaco, which he took the liberty of mentioning today, and which appeared to him to contain both curious and painful particulars.

801 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 225-6.)DOWNING STREET. *19th July. 1881.*

Mr. Gladstone, with his humble duty, offers to Your Majesty his deep and cordial sympathy under the loss which Your Majesty sustains in the decease of Dean Stanley.

The sentiments with which Your Majesty was known to regard him, and which a man of his character would beyond others be able to appreciate, will find a fitting accompaniment in the public grief on his sudden and, as may still be said, early removal. He, who carried, according to the saying, his heart on his sleeve, had won for himself a marked place in the general affection of his countrymen; who will not readily forget either his genial and attaching disposition, his boundless generosity, or his brilliant gifts and varied accomplishments. . . .

While there may, and must, be much diversity as to parts of the opinions of Dean Stanley, he will be long remembered as one who was capable of the deepest and widest love, and who received it in return, and who unsparingly devoted his entire life and all his faculties, according to the best of his knowledge, towards promoting the honour of his Maker, and the welfare of mankind.

802 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*OSBORNE. *July 20. 1881.*

The Queen thanks Mr. Gladstone for all his letters.

She especially thanks him for his sympathy on the occasion of the new & most grievous loss she & the Nation & the Church have sustained in the death—after so short & unexpected an illness—of her dear valued & so highly & rarely gifted friend Dean Stanley. To lose 2 such true & devoted friends as Lord Beaconsfield & Dean Stanley within three months is indeed *terrible* !

And the Queen will not attempt to say how vy grievously & deeply she feels it.—

The Dean's large & wide charity & tolerance, his fearlessness—his charming gentleness, patience—his marvellous knowledge & memory made him one of the most agreeable people—who ever existed—& the Queen will miss him terribly—her friendship & intimacy with him dating from the time of her sorrow & also from his marriage with her dear friend L<sup>y</sup> Augusta Stanley.

The Queen trusts a statue to him who (whatever difference of opinion there may have been amongst violent men in the Church) was universally liked & admired & acknowledged to be the *greatest & worthiest Dean* Westminster Abbey ever had,—will be placed there. Perhaps best a recumbent one over the grave w<sup>h</sup> will hold him with his dear wife in Henry VII's Chapel. Can this not be voted by Parl<sup>t</sup>—or w<sup>ld</sup> it be placed by private subscription?

803

*General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*OSBORNE. *August 3. 1881.*

I am commanded by The Queen to let you know that Her Majesty cannot think the appointment of Mr. Leonard Courtney as Under Secretary for the Colonies will be suitable.

Mr. Courtney's very strong opinions on the Transvaal were so outspoken that his assumption of that office would be extremely undesirable.

Her Majesty commands me to remind you that when the present Government was formed you did not place certain individuals in the offices in the business of which they had made themselves conspicuous when in opposition and that you told The Queen it was never advisable to give any one charge of a department respecting which he had expressed extreme opinions.

The Queen therefore hopes that some other arrangement will be made and that Mr. Leonard Courtney will not be recommended to her for the office of Under Secretary for the Colonies.

*Endorsed*To Ld. Gr[anville]<sup>1</sup>Sir W[illiam] H[arcourt]<sup>2</sup>Ld. K[imberley]<sup>3</sup><sup>1</sup> Foreign Secretary.<sup>2</sup> Home Secretary.<sup>3</sup> Colonial Secretary.

Lord Granville

I think this intolerable. It is by courtesy only that these appointments are made known to H.M.

3 Aug. 1881.

W. E. G.

804 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

[*Telegram*]

5 Aug. 1881. 7.50 p.m.

. . . Question of Under-Secretary is urgent Department being unrepresented and Cabinet sitting tomorrow.

805 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

OSBORNE. August 5. 1881.

I have given your letter to The Queen.

She regrets the appointment but makes no further objection.

806 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[*Telegram*]

Aug. 6. 1881.

I have approved the appointment of Under Secretary at C[olonial] O[ffice].

807 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 228-30.)

OSBORNE. 7 Aug. 1881.

The Queen has to thank Mr. Gladstone for his regular & interesting reports of the proceedings in the House of Commons<sup>1</sup>—many of which are of a most disgraceful character. But how can you expect *better* from so many members of such low & revolutionary kinds who are now in the House of Commons?—

No regulations the Queen *fears* will alter *this*.

As regards the Amendments the Queen sincerely trusts that Mr. Gladstone will—if not *support*—at least *not* oppose as many of them as he possibly can. The House of Commons after all, is only *one* out of the 3 Parties in the Constitution so much boasted of—and truly respected & admired—who pass the Laws intended for the good of the Empire—and it is g<sup>ly</sup> to be desired that the Gov<sup>t</sup> sh<sup>ld</sup> *not* send up measures so framed, to the Upper House,—that the Lords cannot *conscientiously* agree to them.—Some of these amendments are really a *security* to the Land Lords w<sup>h</sup> was

<sup>1</sup> On the Irish Land Bill.

much needed—& the *Queen* can only *trust* that Mr. Gladstone *will* be conciliatory & not yield to his many *vy* extreme followers—& indeed even members of his Gov<sup>t</sup>.—

There is another subject w<sup>h</sup> causes the *Queen* g<sup>t</sup> *anxiety*—for she thinks we shall be guilty of *gt injustice & cruelty* if we do *not* assist & support them.

That is the reports of Sir H. Robinson<sup>1</sup> on the feeling of the Natives.

It *was* on *this very acc<sup>t</sup> & because* of the . . . *cruelty* of these . . . Boers—towards the Natives—that Lord Carnarvon<sup>2</sup> felt the Gov<sup>t</sup> was *forced* to annex the Transvaal ;—& the *Queen must* ask that the Natives sh<sup>ld</sup> be reassured that in case of a repetition of such cruelty *we*, the *gt* supporters of *all* that helps to put down Slavery & any thing tending to crush & oppress the Natives,—we shall not abandon them to the tender mercies of a . . . cruel neighbour—& in fact oppressor.—

Lastly the *Queen* trusts that the answer with regard to Cyprus will be firm & unequivocal.

Mr. Gladstone *promised* the *Queen* when he took office that there sh<sup>ld</sup> be no reversal of *facts* ;—but the precedent of the Transvaal is a most unfortunate one—& naturally makes the *Queen* apprehensive of further attempts of this nature.

The *Queen* hopes to see Mr. Gladstone here before she leaves for Scotland w<sup>h</sup> she does D.V. on the 23<sup>d</sup> stopping in Edinburgh till the night of the 26<sup>th</sup>.

808

### *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

(Partly printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 234.)

OSBORNE. Aug. 17. 1881.

The *Queen* thanks Mr. Gladstone for his letter & rejoices that the difficulties<sup>3</sup> which threatened to be very serious have been surmounted & that conciliatory conduct on both sides prevailed—for the general good.

The *Queen* trusts that this will always be the case.

She hopes Mrs. Gladstone is better ? The *Queen* fears that poor President Garfield<sup>4</sup> is sinking w<sup>h</sup> is very sad.

<sup>1</sup> High Commissioner of South Africa.

<sup>2</sup> Colonial Secretary in Mr. Disraeli's Government, 1874–8.

<sup>3</sup> On the Irish Land Bill in the House of Lords.

<sup>4</sup> President Garfield had been shot at Washington, July 2, 1881.



809 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

10, DOWNING STREET. WHITEHALL. 17 Aug. 1881.

. . . Mr. Gladstone has had the honor to receive before Post time Your Majesty's gracious letter. He is able to make a most favourable report of Mrs. Gladstone who hopes to go out of town on Friday. He shares Your Majesty's apprehension and deep regret about the state of President Garfield.

810 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

BALMORAL CASTLE. Sept. 22. 1881.

The Queen ought ere this to have returned the Pamphlet on Monaco wh<sup>h</sup> he gave her sometime ago & wh<sup>h</sup> she read with much interest & she must add—horror.

The Crown Princess<sup>1</sup> spoke of it to her also, & was anxious, that the Society founded to put an end to such iniquities sh<sup>ld</sup> be encouraged—in wh<sup>h</sup> wish the Queen entirely concurs. . . .

How sad is the poor President's death<sup>2</sup> at last after such long sufferings & such alternations of hope & fear!

811 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

Sept. 27. 1881.

In reply to Your Majesty's letter of the 22nd, Mr. Gladstone reports, with his humble duty, that he will endeavour to learn something more definite about the Association for putting down the gambling house at Monaco, and will consider whether some donation to it might be expedient: which he thinks Your Majesty would not dislike his making should the result of the inquiry seem to warrant it. . . .

812 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*(Partly printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 241.)

BALMORAL CASTLE. Oct. 1. 1881.

. . . She would gladly approve of any donation to the association to put down the gambling at Monaco. The news from South Africa are serious.

The Queen relies *confidently* on the firmness of the Govt. & on their *not* yielding farther to these . . . Boers.—We have

<sup>1</sup> German Crown Princess.<sup>2</sup> President Garfield died, September 19, 1881.

gone as far as we could already—but *yielding more* w<sup>ld</sup> only be weakness & injure us seriously.

The weather has been splendid this week—and *here* the Harvest—tho' late—will, the Queen hopes—not be too bad. Last week's heavy rain did g<sup>t</sup> harm lower down in the Country.

The Queen has heard it repeatedly said that Mr. Gladstone meditates proposing Land Bills similar to the Irish one for Scotland & England. She has *invariably* replied she felt SURE this was *not* the case—for he *himself* told her so.—But she thinks it w<sup>ld</sup> be WELL if Mr. Gladstone c<sup>ld</sup> take an opportunity of *letting this be known*—for there are symptoms of agitation on the subject both in this Country & in England, and a bad harvest might give credence to this report. The Queen has heard nothing from Mr. Forster<sup>1</sup> since his return, but w<sup>ld</sup> wish him to report to her on the State of Ireland. . . .

813

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 241.)

[Telegram]

BALMORAL. Oct. 2. 1881.

I see you are to attend a great banquet at Leeds. Let me express a hope that you will be very cautious not to say anything which may bind you to any particular measure. Every word is look[ed] for and criticised [and] the times are serious.

814 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 241-2.)

HAWARDEN. Oct. 2. 1881.

Mr. Gladstone has had the honor to receive Your Majesty's ciphered telegram of this day ; and thanks Your Majesty for the caution contained in it.

This visit to Leeds is not spontaneously sought on the part of Mr. Gladstone but is the necessary though burdensome acknowledgment of a great obligation conferred by that Town upon him and his Party by returning him to Parliament, without solicitation, with a vast majority, and with a full knowledge that, if elected for Midlothian and called to exercise an option he would sit for the Country.

It has unfortunately happened that, at the period appointed

<sup>1</sup> Chief Secretary.

for redeeming this debt (and it could not longer be deferred) public affairs are by no means in an easy state.

Mr. Gladstone does not expect to enter largely upon the legislation of the future. On Transvaal affairs he will study special circumspection. There are three matters which weigh much on his mind, and on which it is his duty to speak strongly. There is first the state of incapacity for the due transaction of business to which the House of Commons has been reduced. Secondly the proceedings of Mr. Parnell (by no means an insignificant personage) which appear to aim manifestly at separation, probably even at hostility between the countries. Thirdly the strange revival, under the name of Fair Trade, of those doctrines or measures of Protection, which it cost the country nearly a quarter of a century of its legislative existence to get rid of. Mr. Gladstone presenting his humble duty to Your Majesty thinks Your Majesty will understand that he may have adequate grounds for speaking plainly, which means speaking strongly, on these three points, with a view to the welfare of the Empire.

815

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

BALMORAL CASTLE. Oct. 4. 1881.

The Queen thanks Mr. Gladstone for his two letters of the 2<sup>d</sup> as well as for his Telegrams.

They are vy satisfactory.—

The warning she gave was what she always impressed on her late Ministers—as words are remembered & taken hold of—often to the serious inconvenience of those who have spoken them.

The conduct of Mr. Parnell is indeed most serious. May it not lead to his being taken up?

816

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

BALMORAL CASTLE. Oct. 12. 1881.

. . . She is glad to see how firmly he spoke out about Ireland & the Transvaal. Both cause much anxiety & nothing but firmness & a due regard to the dignity of the Crown & Country will be of any use.

Until Mr. Parnell is stopped in his wicked career there *can* be no hope of peace or of any state of order in that wretched Country.—

Respecting the land question the Queen feels rather anxious. So much harm may be done by meddling with the Laws of entail.

Is the Chancellor<sup>1</sup> seriously indisposed? The Queen had no letter yester<sup>y</sup> from him asking to be relieved from receiving the L<sup>d</sup> Mayor,—& 5 or 6 weeks ago—he said he required complete rest. He was looking v<sup>y</sup> unwell when the Queen saw him in Aug.—

She is glad Mr. Gladstone pauses abt Mr. Oakley<sup>2</sup>—for the Ritualists ought in no way to be encouraged.

817

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 244.)

[Telegram]

13<sup>th</sup> Oct. 1881.

Thanks for your letter. Much pleased that you are acting with vigour in Ireland, and that you are firm about Transvaal. Parnell's arrest a great thing.<sup>3</sup> . . .

818

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

BALMORAL CASTLE. Nov. 1. 1881.

The Queen is *surprised & grieved* to hear that the meeting between the Duke of Cambridge & Mr. Childers<sup>4</sup> with respect to the app<sup>t</sup> of Adjutant General has not led to any satisfactory result.

But on the *contrary* that Mr. Childers *persists* in *forcing* on the Duke, the only Officer of the Army<sup>5</sup> with whom the Duke cannot work, *As Adjutant General*.

This will *inevitably* lead to the resignation of the Duke.

Sir Henry Ponsonby has written more fully to Mr. Gladstone & he will be ready to go to Hawarden at any time to explain more strongly the Queen's views if Mr. Gladstone sh<sup>d</sup> desire to see him.

But the Queen appeals strongly to Mr. Gladstone to put an end to this controversy w<sup>h</sup> if *pressed must* lead to deplorable & serious consequences.

She cannot conceal from Mr. Gladstone that she is much shocked at Mr. Childers' conduct.

<sup>1</sup> Lord Selborne.

<sup>2</sup> High Church clergyman.

<sup>3</sup> Mr. Parnell was arrested in Dublin and imprisoned at Kilmainham, October 13, 1881.

<sup>4</sup> Secretary for War.

<sup>5</sup> Sir G. Wolseley.

819 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

HAWARDEN. 3 Nov. 1881.

Mr. Gladstone, with his humble duty, acknowledges Your Majesty's letter of the 1st, and loses no time in replying to it, in order that he may exonerate the Secretary of State from Your Majesty's dissatisfaction, which if due to anyone ought probably rather to attach to Mr. Gladstone himself. Before seeing H.R.H. the Duke of Cambridge on Saturday last, Mr. Childers made known to Mr. Gladstone that the principal subject of the interview would be the staff appointments under his Royal Highness, and entered into certain explanations. But Mr. Gladstone did not feel himself to be in full possession of the case, and it also appeared to him to involve some questions of delicacy which could best be dealt with in conversation. He did not therefore encourage Mr. Childers to expect from him a full opinion upon it, until after personal communications, which can be held without difficulty next week. Mr. Gladstone himself, at his age and with the views he entertains, is desirous to be particularly careful in all matters involving the future, and he has also felt that it would be most satisfactory to Your Majesty that the entire case should be fully considered before the Secretary of State finally tendered his advice upon the difficulties which have arisen. He will take care that no time is lost, after his arrival in town, in proceeding to deal with this matter. In the meantime there is no occasion, he thinks, for his availing himself of Your Majesty's gracious offer to send Sir Henry Ponsonby to Hawarden.

P.S.—Mr. Gladstone hopes it is unnecessary for him to use any but the fewest words, if indeed even these be required, to assure Your Majesty that no idea can be more remote from his mind, and from the views of his colleagues, than that of introducing a political character into the patronage of the Army.

820 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

BALMORAL. November 4. 1881.

I am commanded by The Queen to let you know that I have, by Her Majesty's orders, written to Lord Kimberley<sup>1</sup> to convey to him The Queen's protest against the premature reduction of our force in South Africa.

<sup>1</sup> Colonial Secretary.

821 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

10, DOWNING STREET. Nov. 14. 1881.

. . . Mr. Gladstone humbly thinks that in deference to the feeling which H.R.H. the Duke of Cambridge has been led to entertain, the contemplated change in the Adjutant Generalship might properly be postponed for six months from the 1st of November which would have been the usual time for the change, and that Sir Garnet Wolseley should then become Adjutant General under the Duke of Cambridge : also that in the meantime Mr. Childers should undertake to arrive at a clear understanding with Sir Garnet Wolseley as to the future expression of his opinions. Mr. Gladstone does not and cannot, indeed, believe that Sir G. Wolseley has at any time promoted his own views, especially in connection with his own advancement, anonymously through the press. But in any case it would be made perfectly clear that nothing of the kind is to take place : neither should he make use of magazines or journals even with his name for making known his sentiments on military questions. In any speech he might be called upon to make, he should carefully keep within the lines which propriety and usage mark out for high military officers holding official appointments. . . .

Mr. Gladstone humbly trusts that the suggestion he has thus presumed to offer may meet with the gracious sanction of Your Majesty.

822 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*[*Telegram*]

14 Nov. 1881.

The Duke of Cambridge will see you if you are in London. He is hurt at the imputation on him and his office and the implied superiority of the Adjutant General.

I hope you can satisfy him and arrive at final settlement.

823 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*[*Telegram*]

BALMORAL. 15 Nov. 1881.

Very much regret your not seeing the Duke as verbal communication is of greatest importance. Am willing and anxious to try and persuade him to accept Sir G. Wolseley in [*blank in original*] months' time, if Mr. Gladstone will pledge himself that Sir G.W. is

to keep entirely aloof from press and public speaking, but I can do nothing unless some authoritative statement is put into the papers disavowing any alteration in the Commander in Chief's position and stating that no appointment has as yet been made. I rely on your seeing this is done. Such statements are continually made and silence will confirm the belief that the articles were prompted by people in office.

## 824

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 249-50.)

OSBORNE. Dec. 31. 1881.

The state of Ireland causes the Queen much painful thought & must she thinks do to Mr. Gladstone.

Notwithstanding the official assurances that matters are improving in Ireland, the Queen continues to read in the newspapers & to hear from various sources—the *most distressing* accounts of the disorder & anarchy that seems to prevail & saw the day before yesterday the copy of a manifesto signed "Patrick Egan" stating that the tenants are at war with the Govt. & *ordering* them to pay "No Rent!"

The Queen is glad to perceive that the Irish Executive have appointed new magistrates with enlarged powers & that the regulations about arms are to be more strictly enforced though the Queen cannot help regretting that this was not done sooner.—The Queen hopes that *greater* efforts may be made to arrest the agitators who have created this state of affairs—to protect her loyal subjects & to punish those who are intimidating & alarming the well affected inhabitants.

If the *law* is powerless to punish wrong doers let increased power be sought for & at *any rate* let no *effort* be *spared* for *putting an end to a state* of affairs which is a DISGRACE to any CIVILISED country.

## 825

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 250.)

OSBORNE. Dec. 31. 1881.

The Queen wishes Mr. & Mrs. Gladstone a happy New Year tho' the clouds wh<sup>h</sup> overhang the political horizon are not very encouraging & darken the opening of 82.

826 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 255.)

HAWARDEN CASTLE. 2nd Jan. 1882.

Mr. Gladstone humbly thanks Your Majesty for the gracious letter of good wishes on the New Year, which he has this day received, and expresses also the gratitude of his wife for Your Majesty's kindness. They have special reason to remember the season with thankfulness, by reason of the birth this morning of a grand-daughter, the first child of their eldest son, and of his wife to whose grandmother Harriet, Duchess of Sutherland, Your Majesty felt so warm an attachment.

Mr. Gladstone humbly prays that the year may be one of public peace and prosperity, and of unbroken health and domestic joy to Your Majesty.

827 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

OSBORNE. January 4. 1882.

The recent catastrophe at Vienna<sup>1</sup> has directed The Queen's attention to the arrangements connected with our Theatres and although she has been assured that the regulations for protecting the Public against Fires are good, she is not satisfied that they are always attended to or may not in some instances be ameliorated. . . .

The Danger from Fire is not confined to Theatres but Music Halls, Concert Rooms as well as Churches, Chapels and all other places of Public Assembly.

It is scarcely desirable that The Queen's Great Officer of State<sup>2</sup> should be held responsible for the Theatres over which he has but a limited control and Her Majesty thinks that it would be far better if the whole of the above named places were managed by a special department which probably would have to be created for this purpose.

As this is a question which affects the safety of the great mass of the people The Queen hopes there will be no difficulty in amending the present state of affairs and commands me to ask

<sup>1</sup> The Ring Theater, Vienna, was burnt on December 8, 1881, with grave loss of life, 447 persons perishing out of an audience of 2,000.

<sup>2</sup> The Lord Chamberlain.



you to consider this subject and to let her hear from you what you think can be done.

### 828 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

OSBORNE. *Jan.* 5. 1882.

The Queen thanks Mr. Gladstone for his letters of the 2nd & 3<sup>d</sup> & congratulates him & Mrs. Gladstone on the birth of his son's first Child.—

She trusts that Mrs. W<sup>m</sup>. Gladstone, & Baby are going on as well as c<sup>ld</sup> be wished.—

The memory of her dear grandmother the Dow<sup>r</sup> D<sup>cess</sup> of Sutherland is very dear to the Queen.

### 829 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 259–60.)

OSBORNE. *Feb.* 11. 1882.

. . . The Queen has read with much care & not without some anxiety Mr. Gladstone's remarks on Mr. Smyth's amendment. She thinks she may safely assume after consideration of Mr. Gladstone's letter that he had no intention to encourage the hopes of those who desire to repeal the Act of Union ; but his words spoken on Mr. Smyth's demand for such repeal undoubtedly produced the effect of countenancing the Home Rule movement in *some* form & will, the Queen fears, give a fresh impetus to the agitation in Ireland.

The Queen must sincerely deplore this circumstance especially at this moment when it was most desirable that the working of the new Land Act should be calmly & carefully allowed to take its course ; & she cannot help thinking it w<sup>ld</sup> have been more prudent to have *firmly* discountenanced *any* attempt at raising this dangerous question. . . .

### 830 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 260–2.)

10, DOWNING STREET. WHITEHALL. 13<sup>th</sup> *Feb.* 1882.

Mr. Gladstone . . . thanks Your Majesty for the free expression of opinion, on the Speech made by him last Thursday, which it contains.

Nothing can be more improbable than that Mr. Gladstone

should ever be called upon to advise Your Majesty as a Minister with reference to the subject known as Home Rule in Ireland. He would not, indeed, regret to see the present most dangerous social agitation in Ireland exchanged for a discussion, or even an agitation, which would speedily bring out the differences between loyal and disloyal men, and which (in Mr. Gladstone's opinion) it would be far less difficult to manage on the part of the Empire.

The sentiments contained in Mr. Gladstone's speech on Thursday were part of a rooted creed ; for he believes that local self-government is the surest basis of strong central institutions, and that the only limit of principle to its extension is the supremacy of the central authority.

On this subject, as on some others, lessons have been learned during the past half century. The self-government now practised in Canada, and generally viewed as safe if not wholly unexceptionable was regarded, in the first years of Mr. Gladstone's Parliamentary life, as a thing fatal to the unity of the Empire.—

Mr. Gladstone has endeavoured to set forth the same ideas on many previous occasions ; in the Guildhall last October before the Corporation of London, in Midlothian and in the House of Commons under the two last Governments, without awakening any of the apprehensions which were expressed on Thursday by Mr. Plunkett.

There is a very real danger which may come above the horizon, and which Mr. Gladstone humbly desires to avert. That danger will have arisen, should a decisive majority of the representatives of Ireland unitedly demand on behalf of their country the adoption of some scheme of Home Rule, which Parliament should be compelled to refuse. To prevent the formation of such an Irish majority is, in Mr. Gladstone's view, a great object of Imperial policy.

There was much risk of it at the beginning of the Session of 1880, when between 60 and 70 Home Rulers had been returned at the Election. This majority Your Majesty's Government have done their best to break up ; and they have succeeded.

Were they now in sweeping terms to denounce every thing that may be comprised within the name " Home Rule," they would be paving the way for its reunion. It is generally agreed that such a majority would be augmented at the next General Election. Mr. Gladstone can for himself only follow the course

which will, as he believes, prevent its consolidation upon any basis dangerous to the Empire or the Throne. But his opinions must so soon cease to be taken into account that even this slight effort to explain them may be hardly worth Your Majesty's perusal.

Yet, for the sake of clearness, Mr. Gladstone ventures further to lengthen it by two observations. The first that he is far from intending to imply that such Home Rule as prevails in Canada could be safely or properly extended to Ireland. The second that he has never intimated any disposition to allow to Ireland anything except what might properly be given (for example) to Scotland, if desired and sought by her.

831 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

OSBORNE. February 15. 1882.

I am commanded by The Queen to thank you for your letter with reference to the Home Rule question.

Her Majesty was afraid that many of the Irish people would give a meaning to your speech which you did not intend it should be.

832 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. February 19. 1882.

. . . Her Majesty trusts that the course you intend to follow in consequence of the vote in the House of Lords<sup>1</sup> on Friday will not provoke a conflict between the two Houses of Parliament.

833 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to General Ponsonby*

Feb. 20. 1882.

We are unwilling to tread the ground on which the Lords have forced us, but we have no choice. The tension in Ireland on the side of our coercion proceeding is great on account of the very large numbers in prison. Any acquiescence by us in such a proceeding as a Landlords' Committee of the Lords would run the risk of shaking all the confidence which the Act has attracted, and possibly of reviving the activity both of the Land League and of the Secret Societies; and thereby losing the whole fruit thus far obtained.

I do not think anything like a conflict between the two Houses

<sup>1</sup> On the Irish Land Bill.

is to be anticipated : and we shall, I am persuaded, do nothing to aggravate the situation which has been created for us.

**834**            *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

[*Telegram*]

WINDSOR. *March 2. 1882.*

Shot fired at the station as Queen drove up to Castle but some distance from carriage and it is not clear that it was aimed at carriage will telegraph later.

**835**            *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

[*Telegram*]

WINDSOR. *March 2. 1882.*

Man named McLean formerly clerk in London fired with a small Revolver other chambers loaded—Queen was not alarmed did not see the act though Princess Beatrice did.

**836 (Copy)**    *Mr. Gladstone to General Ponsonby*

*March 2. 1882.*

I thank you very much for your repeated Telegrams and for the detail contained in your letter. It is a mercy that this has been so wild and foolish an attempt and has been as barren as it was wild ; and not less for the Queen's unfailing courage and firmness.

As the Home Secretary<sup>1</sup> proposes to go down to Windsor tomorrow, I need not trouble you with further remark, except that I hope the matter will not receive the same sort of judicial handling which a similar one as I recollect received from Mr. Justice Cleasby.<sup>2</sup>

**837 (Copy)**    *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

*March 2-3, 1882.*

Mr. Gladstone presents his humble duty to Your Majesty and must commence his comments on the proceedings of to-day by recording the shock, which was produced in the House of Commons this evening by the announcement that a shot had been fired at Your Majesty on quitting the Station at Windsor to-day. In the present imperfect state of his information he will only assure Your Majesty of the joy and thankfulness with which all have learned that this attempt, whether due to wickedness or to aberration of mind, has been harmless in result. . . .

<sup>1</sup> Sir W. Harcourt.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. 438-40, 442-3, 452-8

838 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*WINDSOR CASTLE. *March 3. 1882.*

The Queen commands me to thank you for both your kind letters.

She has indeed been very much touched by the Universal feeling of sympathy which has been manifested on this occasion.

839 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to General Ponsonby*DOWNING STREET. *3rd March. 1882.*

As respects an Address, the dominant feeling in my mind has been that the whole of these deplorable attempts on the life of the Queen have proceeded from men of weak and morbid minds ; that to such minds notoriety is the very highest reward and inducement that can be offered, and that from their point of view an Address, which puts the Houses of Parliament in motion under their impulsion, is of itself in the nature of such reward and inducement. Finally that the best means of dealing with these cases are to keep from them what feeds the vain imagination and to administer sharp judicial sentences. . . .

840 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*10, DOWNING STREET. WHITEHALL. *4th March. 1882.*

. . . The Cabinet then proceeded to consider the question of an Address to Your Majesty on the subject of the reckless and wicked attempt made at Windsor on Your Majesty's life after the arrival at the station. . . .

The statements submitted by Sir W. Harcourt on the facts as they now stand, and the clear opinion of the Attorney General that the prisoner ought to be indicted for an attempt to murder, appear decidedly to place this attempt, in the public eye, on the footing of the earlier and more serious attempts ; and the Cabinet are therefore clearly of opinion that it will be proper to proceed upon the precedents of 1840 and May 1842. Arrangements will therefore be made for a Joint Address of the two Houses : it will be moved on Monday ; and the leaders of the Opposition in the respective Houses have been apprised. . . .

841

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*WINDSOR CASTLE. *March 5. 1882.*

The Queen thanks Mr. Gladstone for his letters—& for his congratulations.

She is glad for the Gov<sup>t</sup>'s sake that a joint Address is to be proposed as with the univ<sup>er</sup>sal & most gratifying burst of enthusiasm & expressions of devoted loyalty wh<sup>h</sup> have poured in from *every* part of her large Empire as well as from foreign Sovereigns & Countries,—the *absence* of *any* expression of this nature from *Parliament* w<sup>ld</sup> have had a *painful effect*. The Queen hopes that the preservation of her dear, excellent Child<sup>1</sup> (who showed wonderful courage & calmness & who devotes her whole life to her Mother)—as well as of all those around her will be alluded to—as being a subject of such deep thankfulness to herself.

842

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*WINDSOR CASTLE. *March 6 1882.*

The Queen wishes to express her satisfaction at the manner in which the Address to herself was moved & seconded in both Houses today.

The Speakers were most kind & loyal.

843 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria**March 14 1882.*

. . . Mr. Gladstone will not forbear to notice that the principal business was a motion by Mr. Broadhurst, a labouring man at no remote period, and a representative of his order. He spoke as he always does with the utmost modesty and propriety, which might well teach a lesson to many, and with no small ability and clearness. Like Mr. Burt, his fellow working-man, he does honour to his class.

844

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*ON BOARD THE *Victoria & Albert*. CHERBOURG. *March 14. 1882.*

The Queen thanks Mr. Gladstone for his very kind letter wh<sup>h</sup> she found on board at Portsmouth.—She is glad to hear of this proposed arrangement for the trial of Maclean wh<sup>h</sup> seems very

<sup>1</sup> Princess Beatrice

satisfactory.—The Queen rejoices to see that her letter (wh<sup>h</sup> is published today) has given satisfaction tho' to *herself*—the expressions do not convey *adequately all* that she feels.—

It is very rare (alas! be it said) that people are so kindly & lovingly spoken of & *appreciated* in their *life-time* as has fallen to *her* lot. Her merciful escape from great danger has called forth such universal expressions of loyalty, affection & sympathy that she is *deeply* touched & gratified by it & she will *never, never* forget it.

We have just arrived after a beautiful passage.

845

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

CHALET DES ROSIERS, MENTONE. March 26. 1882.

The Queen thanks Mr. Gladstone for his letters—& has read with much satisfaction his Speeches on Leopold's additional grant.<sup>1</sup> But she must own that she thinks Mess<sup>rs</sup> Story's & Healy's were atrocious. . . .

Mr. Labouchere's showed great ignorance as to facts—but was far less offensive.—

The Queen trusts that Mr. Gladstone will take (wh<sup>h</sup> she doubts *not* he *will*) every opportunity wh<sup>h</sup> may still offer itself to make it clearly understood that it is a *compact* & an agreement in consequence of the abandonment by the Sovereign at the commencement of each reign—of the Hereditary Revenues—& therefore the *right* of the sovereign & *not* the . . . *generosity* of Parlt. . . .

Another g<sup>t</sup> mistake made by these . . . Radicals—is *not* distinguishing the *difference* wh<sup>h</sup> exists between the vy rich landed proprietors, & the Royal family. The former inherit large fortunes—many far larger—*not only* than the Royal family but than the *Sovereign* himself, & yet have *no status* or Court to maintain. Whereas *we* have *no* property—Nothing of our own—& must maintain this Status ; & are expected to give largely to Charities &c. &c. *This sh<sup>d</sup>* be pointed out. . . .

This is so long a letter that the Queen has hardly time to add more but she wishes to say how enchanted she is with Mentone, the scenery & vegetation, & how well she feels in ~~the air~~ <sup>the air</sup> & the comparative rest are doing her real good—& the dear Princess is g<sup>ty</sup> enjoying & benefitting by it also.—

<sup>1</sup> Prince Leopold was to be married on April 27, 1882.

P.S.—Is it true that Sir C. Dilke<sup>1</sup> & Mr. Fawcett<sup>2</sup> did not vote for P<sup>ce</sup> Leop<sup>d</sup>'s annuity? If so—the Queen must say she thinks it very unfortunate that such people sh<sup>ld</sup> be in the Gov<sup>t</sup> & it must put an effectual bar to their ever being Cabinet Ministers.

#### 846 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

March 29, 1882.

. . . He need hardly assure Your Majesty that he has read with close attention Your Majesty's interesting and important letter of the 26th which reached him today. He will briefly refer to the leading topics on which it touches.

1. He feels that no epithets can be too strong to apply to the Speeches of Mr. Healy and Mr. Story—but contrary perhaps to the intention of the Speakers, he has no doubt that they helped to swell the overwhelming majority in favour of the Bill.

2. He feels that to accord these grants is not a matter of gracious generosity on the part of Parliament, but the application of a prudent policy and the fulfilment of an honourable understanding, favourable to the interests of the public and to the stability of the Throne. . . .

Mr. Gladstone rejoices to learn that Your Majesty is profiting by the visit to Mentone.

#### 847 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

March 29, 1882.

. . . He has not examined the Division List, but he has been told that Sir C. Dilke and Mr. Fawcett forbore from voting on the grant to Prince Leopold; and he presumes this was intentional.

He was not made aware of their intention beforehand. Strictly speaking they ought without doubt to have communicated with him. He has no reason to suppose that the course they took was prompted by any other motive than the embarrassment which they may have felt to have been drawn upon them by previous votes against some similar grant. But the act cannot in principle be sustained; and, if there be reason to apprehend a repetition of it, precaution ought to be taken on a future occasion.

<sup>1</sup> Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs.

<sup>2</sup> Postmaster-General.



848 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*10, DOWNING STREET, WHITEHALL. *April 1. 1882.*

Mr. Gladstone with his humble duty and in relation to his letter on the absence of two members of the Government from the Division on the grant to H.R.H. Prince Leopold, reports to Your Majesty that he has conversed pretty fully on the subject with Earl Granville, and has further reflected on the matter, with this result. He has nothing to withdraw from the statement already laid before Your Majesty. He thinks however that the course actually taken, although open to just exception, was probably productive of less mischief than any other which, under the circumstances of previous error, they could have adopted. For although Mr. Gladstone might undoubtedly have insisted upon their votes, they might equally have insisted that in such case they must speak, one or both. The inconvenience of this would have been great, while the claim would have been undeniable. Mr. Gladstone could readily explain his view on this point when he next has the honour of an audience, should Your Majesty desire it. Mr. Gladstone feels confident that Sir C. Dilke has had no intention of withdrawing from that expression of regret, with respect to earlier and rather juvenile proceedings, which was made known to Your Majesty at the time when the existing Government took office.

849 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*MENTONE. *April 2. 1882.*

In reply to what you have written to The Queen concerning Sir Charles Dilke's vote, Her Majesty commands me to remind you of your conversation with her on the same subject when you said that he (Sir C. Dilke) fully admitted his fault and was quite prepared to say so if he should be *reminded* of it by his constituents and friends.

The Queen thinks that the abstention from voting on Prince Leopold's annuity was a good opportunity and even now it might not be too late to ask him to say what you informed The Queen he was ready to do.

850 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to General Ponsonby*HAWARDEN. *6 April. 1882.*

In the matter of Sir C. Dilke my memory does not serve me beyond my having named to the Queen what I call his repentance.

But I have great faith in the Queen's recollections, and I do not doubt I may have expressed the opinion, or even (so to speak) conveyed a message that it would be useful if he were prepared now to announce that he would hereafter vote for any grant that might be proposed by the Government.

I am not sure that he would give this pledge ; and I should be going beyond my rights were I to exact it.

My opinion is that an abstention upon one occasion, by way of transition, was not unpardonable, and was less inconvenient to high interests than an affirmative vote with an explanation would have been ; but that the abstention ought not to be repeated.

I think moreover it will be well for me to lay out the matter in this sense in a conversation with Sir C. Dilke, so that he may understand that nothing has been said or done to condone abstention in principle or to bind the Government to acquiesce in it on a future occasion. It will be well also that he should make this known to any other member of the Administration, should there be any, who may feel similar difficulties.

I ought to add my conviction that his conduct has been perfectly straightforward. He states that when the Government was in course of formation he gave me notice that he would not be able to vote affirmatively, at an interview in the presence of Lord Granville. Neither Lord Granville nor I can remember this, but we cannot undertake to deny it. He has not stated that there was any concurrence on my part, and I have no doubt that if the incident took place my answer was that no practical question then impended, and that the subject might stand for consideration when it might arise.

851

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

CHERBOURG. 14th April. 1882.

I heard with surprise today that Mr. Parnell was in Paris. Not having received any intimation from Irish Govt. I ask if this can be true.

852 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

HAWARDEN. 14 April. 1882.

Mr. Gladstone with his humble duty reports that he has this afternoon received Your Majesty's ciphered Telegram concerning

the release of Mr. Parnell on *parole*. To this he has briefly replied, and has now to add that the public, even in Ireland, where at first there was great excitement, now appears to comprehend that the Act is entirely without political significance.

The Irish Government had found it proper and expedient in the case of other suspects to grant a furlough so to call it of this nature, and it was judged impossible to exclude Mr. Parnell from the benefit of similar treatment. It does not appear that any other course was open ; and yet the incident has not been without a certain degree of inconvenience.

### 853 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

HAWARDEN. *April 14. 1882.*

. . . Remembering, on a former occasion, Your Majesty's sentiments of displeasure concerning Monte Carlo, Mr. Gladstone read without surprise, but not on that account with the less pleasure, of the recent miscarriage of the overture ventured from that quarter. . . .

### 854 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. *April 20. 1882.*

. . . The state of Ireland becomes worse & worse. Lord Cowper gives a most deplorable acc<sup>t</sup> of it. & L<sup>d</sup> Kenmare is threatened on all sides & can hardly keep his House in London. What further steps is Mr. Gladstone going to take ? . . .

### 855 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

*April 20. 1882.*

. . . Mr. Gladstone humbly feels with Your Majesty that when an individual, such as Maclean, has probably been sane in respect to the particular act for which he is tried, an acquittal on the ground of insanity is not a satisfactory form under which to attain the end of at least disabling him from further mischief by the total loss of his personal liberty. He hopes indeed that all who understand that this forfeiture is really a forfeiture for life may perceive the gravity of the consequences following the act. Ignorant of the law, he does not venture an opinion whether the form of proceeding in these cases might not be amended so as to avoid any possible mischief which might arise from the use of the phrase

"Not guilty." On this subject he will, if it meet Your Majesty's approval, communicate with the authorities for the better information of his judgment; for he is deeply impressed with the gravity of the subject.

As regards the substance of the proceeding in the particular case, the Home Secretary has he believes explained to Your Majesty, not only that the best course possible under the circumstances has been followed but that virtually no choice was left. Mr. Gladstone cannot too strongly assure Your Majesty of the devoted care, intelligence, and as he thinks good sense, which has been applied to the case, as was indeed their bounden duty, by those of Your Majesty's servants who have been more immediately concerned in dealing with its details.

856

*General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 273-4)

WINDSOR CASTLE. April 29. 1882.

I am commanded by The Queen to let you know that Her Majesty will be prepared to accept Lord Cowper's resignation and to approve of the appointment of Lord Spencer to the Lord Lieutenancy of Ireland.

Her Majesty will make no remark on the Government of Ireland by Lord Cowper whose amiable qualities she fully recognizes, but thinks with you that the Chief Executive Officer in Ireland should at this crisis not only be clothed with the highest authority but should also publicly assert that authority and exercise the powers that have been granted to him.

The Queen trusts that nothing will be done to cast any slur on Mr. Forster who she is glad retains the office of Chief Secretary.

The Queen would have looked on the appointment of Lord Spencer as a mission to devote himself entirely to the cause of law and order in Ireland and to the interests of the Irish people, but as he is to retain his other office<sup>1</sup> to which he is eventually to return Her Majesty cannot help fearing<sup>2</sup> that this will give the effect of its being a half hearted measure.

It can scarcely be intended that Lord Spencer can expect to restore tranquillity in Ireland in three or four months, nor that anticipating failure he should keep his office in Whitehall to fall back upon.

<sup>1</sup> Lord President of the Council.

The Queen thinks this will be looked upon as an experiment of a temporary nature and not a thorough and earnest proceeding.

As however, the arrangement is recommended by you and the Cabinet, The Queen will approve of it.

### 857 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 278.)

May 3, 1882.

Mr. Gladstone reports to Your Majesty with his humble duty that he has to-day seen the Lord Chief Justice in concert with the Attorney General.

Concurring in what he believes to be Your Majesty's view, he has strongly stated it to Lord Coleridge, and has urged that a change should be made in the form of the verdict which was passed upon Maclean, to obviate the risk of its producing dangerous misapprehensions in morbid minds, and the consequences which in such minds are apt to be engendered. . . .

### 858

#### *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 277-8.)

WINDSOR CASTLE. May 3, 1882.

. . . As Mr. Gladstone was so urgent for the release of the 3 suspects<sup>1</sup> & believes that it will tend to do good in Ireland & *help* to restore peace & order—she did not think she ought to withhold her consent to this step. But she cannot conceal from him that she considers it a *very hazardous* one, the more so as Mr. Forster who must know the state of Ireland better than any one, & in whom she has great confidence, feels bound to resign upon it.<sup>2</sup>

The Queen cannot but feel that it will have the effect of a triumph to Home Rule & of great weakness.

She trusts she may be mistaken as to the results of this course—but she much dreads they will not be favourable to the maintenance of authority & respect of law & order.

Please show this letter to Lord Granville & Lord Hartington.

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Parnell was released from Kilmainham, May 2, 1882

<sup>2</sup> Mr. W. E. Forster, Chief Secretary, resigned, May 2, 1882.

859 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

Appd V. R.

Lord Frederick Cavendish is humbly recommended to Your Majesty by Mr. Gladstone to be Chief Secretary<sup>1</sup> to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland : without a seat in the Cabinet.

May 3. 1882.

860 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 281.)

4th May. 1882.

Is it possible that M. Davitt, known as one of the worst of the treasonable agitators, is also to be released ? I cannot believe it. Three suspects were spoken of but no one else.

861 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 286-8.)

DOWNING STREET. May 7. 1882.

Mr. Gladstone submits his humble duty, and refers to such partial intelligence as he has been able to send to Windsor for Your Majesty in relation to the terrible catastrophe which at this moment weighs so heavily upon so many hearts.<sup>2</sup>

The pressure and manifold demands of the moment, so various in kinds, disable Mr. Gladstone from doing more than reporting to Your Majesty such particulars, as without attempting any regular order or completeness he can hastily throw together.

He received the news, together with his wife, on returning from dinner last night at the Austrian Ambassador's, not long before midnight. They went over to the house, and found Lucy<sup>3</sup> had just been apprised by Lady Louisa Egerton. Lord Hartington, Lord Granville, and Mrs. J. G. Talbot also came there.

Lucy received the awful blow in a manner which only her noble character as a woman and a Christian could have rendered possible. Mrs. Talbot, her sister, remained with her for the night, and Mrs. Gladstone went early this morning, and will remain with her to-night.

<sup>1</sup> On the resignation of Mr. W. E. Forster.

<sup>2</sup> The murder of Lord F. Cavendish and Mr. Burke in Phoenix Park, Dublin, on May 6, 1882.

<sup>3</sup> Lady F. Cavendish.

Her demeanour astonished Mr. Gladstone even after all he has known of her. Your Majesty will not think it affectation in him to cite a line of poetry, which best expresses his thought

Lift up thy love above thy misery.

But there is something that she lifts up even above her love : she says she can give away freely all her hopes and joys in his precious life, if indeed the sacrifice shall be found to avail in saving the life and peace of his fellow-creatures.

Lord Hartington determined to telegraph to his brother Edward who is with the Duke<sup>1</sup> at Chatsworth, and to go down himself after doing it. This stroke also will be dreadful ; Mr. Gladstone has not heard the result of the communication.

Though he was slaughtered by a dagger or cutting instrument, it appears that the expression of the countenance is not altered. This is a mercy ; it shews that he must have been spared bodily agony by the rapidity of death. There must be an inquest to-morrow. The remains will be carried to Chatsworth but can hardly arrive before Tuesday morning. Lucy's first impulse was to go to Ireland, but the plan is changed and she will go to Chatsworth where he will be interred. Those who knew him in the business of the Treasury are overwhelmed with the same sorrow as the persons nearest to him. In the Chapel Royal this afternoon Mr. Helmore was as usual intoning the prayers. He made a pause in the prayer for all sorts and conditions of men at the part which refers to the afflicted ; but his voice gave way, and he could hardly struggle through the remainder of the prayers in the ordinary reading. Every face in the street seems to bear the mark of the intelligence.

It is thought from the use of cutting instruments, that the crime is rather of American-Irish creation than of Irish at home. It does not appear clear who was the special aim of the murderers. Mr. Gladstone thinks with those who believe it to have been probably Mr. Burke, and Lord Frederick may have been assassinated as his companion. All this will probably be cleared up. What most astonished Mr. Gladstone and most others is that on such a day, and at such a crisis, he should have been allowed to walk all the way from the castle to the Lodge in the Phoenix Park without being attended or watched by the Police. Some think

<sup>1</sup> The Duke of Devonshire, father of Lord F. Cavendish.

that the immediate stimulus to this Fenian crime was rage at being abandoned by the Chiefs of the Land League movement, and at their apparent desertion to the cause of order.

On this subject Mr. Gladstone thinks it right to mention to Your Majesty that he has had a communication from Mr. O'Shea, M.P. for Clare, the gentleman (himself wholly unconnected with the Land League) who tendered information some little time back to Mr. Gladstone and his colleagues respecting the altered intentions of Mr. Parnell. Mr. O'Shea informs him that a circular has been prepared and telegraphed all over Ireland, which in vehement terms denounces the assassins and entreats the people of Ireland to use their strongest efforts to bring them to justice. This circular which Mr. O'Shea believed would also contain an earnest intreaty not to offend against the law is signed by Mr. Parnell, Mr. Dillon and Mr. Davitt.

Whatever responsibility these gentlemen may previously have incurred in the toleration of outrage, and Mr. Gladstone believes that it is grave—it is manifest that they are thoroughly in earnest on this occasion.

It is impossible at this moment to forecast all the issue, but there is no doubt in Mr. Gladstone's mind that, quite apart from the horror and exterior features of the assassination, it is a large and weighty public event, which may in the course of the Almighty be designed to produce many important consequences.

Mr. Gladstone must add that Mr. Forster has most kindly offered to go at once to Dublin and assist Lord Spencer with information which he might lack through the death of Mr. Burke. But his journey might be misconstrued and the offer has been gratefully declined.

Mr. Gladstone believes that the heads of the Irish municipal bodies, and the Roman Catholic Bishops and clergy will be moved to denounce this horrible assassination.

The Queen has to thank Mr. Gladstone for his letter rec<sup>d</sup> last night.—Many sad details of the horrible event had already & have since reached her—all calculated to make one's blood run cold & to produce an indescribable thrill of horror.



The Queen wishes to express her sincere sympathy with Mr. & Mrs. Gladstone in the loss of so dear a nephew & friend as Lord Frederic Cavendish was—in so horrible a manner.—

She has just written to poor dear Lucy for whom her heart bleeds—& whose anguish & misery in spite of courage & resignation she can but too well imagine.

Next to her she feels most deeply for the poor Duke of Devonshire.—

The Queen saw last night for some time, Mr. Ross, who Lord Spencer sent & she trusts Mr. Gladstone will see him & hear from his lips the state of Ireland.

863                    *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. May 8. 1882.

The Queen having been repeatedly told that it would be a great advantage to the Militia if she would inspect that force—promised to do so this month.

She has been disappointed by the decision of the Cabinet preventing her from doing so.

Her Majesty thinks that it would be only fair to announce the true cause and to have it stated that she had intended to have held this review but abandoned it because the Government objected on the ground of expense.

864 (*Copy*)    *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

May 8. 1882.

Mr. Gladstone with his humble duty presents to Your Majesty's notice a Memorandum in which he has endeavoured to set forth fully the position of Sir Charles Dilke with reference to Grants for members of the Royal Family.

As a great desire to hear that the successor to Lord F. Cavendish has been chosen has been expressed by Sir S. Northcote to Sir W. Harcourt, Mr. Gladstone humbly represents, without entering into other reasons, that the recommendation<sup>1</sup> herewith transmitted is somewhat urgent.

<sup>1</sup> Submitting the appointment of Mr. G. O. Trevelyan as Chief Secretary.

(Copy)

## ENCLOSURE

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 290-2.)

10, DOWNING STREET, WHITEHALL. 8 May. 1882.

*Memorandum*

After communicating with the Queen and with Lord Granville on the abstinence of Sir Charles Dilke from voting on the Grant for Prince Leopold's marriage, Mr. Gladstone felt that, independently of Lord Granville's report, he ought himself to see Sir Charles Dilke, but owing to the heavy pressure of business he was only able to fulfil this intention on Friday last.

Sir Charles Dilke explained at the onset that he did before the division request Mr. Chamberlain to make known to Mr. Gladstone the position in which he found himself. Mr. Gladstone believes that this message must have escaped Mr. Chamberlain's memory: if not, the blame is his own: in any case Sir Charles Dilke is exempt.

Mr. Gladstone stated his views to Sir Charles Dilke. They may be summed up in the following propositions. On account of Sir Charles Dilke's declarations and acts at an earlier time this particular case may be treated as a stage of transition, but cannot be drawn into a precedent.

Questions relating directly to the Sovereign, and involving money, are questions of importance, and still more of delicacy, and of risk: for on these questions serious opposition might entail consequences worse than defeat.

This being so it is necessary on all such subjects for the Government to rally its independent supporters to the best of its ability.

But no call can be possibly made upon the independent supporters of the Government in such a case, unless the official servants of the Crown vote uniformly and steadily for the Grant proposed.

The Queen is therefore entitled to require their votes: and Her Majesty is believed by Mr. Gladstone to take her stand upon this unquestionable title.

It would have been hardly possible for Sir Charles Dilke, consistently with honour, to re-consider his position while any actual or probable case was pending. But there is no such case, actual or probable, at the present time.

Mr. Gladstone therefore had no desire to receive any present answer from Sir Charles Dilke ; but he commended the question as one of necessity, to Sir Charles Dilke's consideration with a view to a practical result.

Sir Charles Dilke is a man who in the future politics of this country will perhaps play a somewhat important part. It was therefore matter of great satisfaction to Mr. Gladstone that he received the communication in the spirit which was to be desired.

He stated that his difficulty arose mainly out of this fact : that whereas at the commencement of the reign the arrangements of the Civil List in general were founded on the recommendations of a Committee appointed by the representative House of Parliament, the scheme of recommendations for the Royal Children had been designed in a Cabinet without Parliamentary examination, and without any opportunity given of considering the plan as a whole.

Mr. Gladstone must in candour confess that he thinks there is much force in Sir Charles Dilke's objection to the mode of action which was chosen by Lord Palmerston's Cabinet and for which as a member of that Cabinet Mr. Gladstone himself is responsible.

But he put it to Sir Charles Dilke, and Sir Charles Dilke appeared to agree, that now, when successive Parliaments as well as successive Cabinets have acted upon the scheme, and have merely worked it out, the time for this objection has gone by.

Mr. Gladstone carefully avoided asking for any promise or pledge from Sir Charles Dilke : who however himself showed every disposition to reconsider his views, and spoke of the sort of opportunities which might be open to him, before his constituents or otherwise, for the purpose.

Mr. Gladstone feels satisfied in his own mind that the just demand of the Queen as to the rule of action will be duly met.

865

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 292-3.)

BUCKINGHAM PALACE. May 9. 1882.

The Queen has not wished to write to Mr. Gladstone and make any observations on the state of Ireland while she knew he was still stunned & overwhelmed by the terrible blow which has shocked all the World.

She wishes now however to express her *earnest* hope that he will

make *no* concession to *those* whose Actions, Speeches & writings, *have produced* the present state of affairs in Ireland & who will be *encouraged* by weak & vacillating action to make *further demands*.

The Queen *deeply regrets* the sudden & hurried release of so many of the suspects, & *still more laments* that amicable *communications* have taken place with the *Chiefs* of that party, *some* of the members of which (Mr. Biggar) think treason justified,—consider pistol shots the best arguments (*Irish World*) & do not hesitate to denounce the loyal men who serve the Queen (Mr. Biggar).

The Queen must call on her Government to protect her subjects from murder & outrage—& to support those who *desire* to be loyal but find no response to their wishes—and thus are driven into the arms of the organizers of Secret Societies—the destruction of the peace of the Country.

Lord Cowper, Mr. Forster & poor Mr. Burke were united in their objection to the fatal policy w<sup>h</sup> was intended as a message of conciliation to Ireland & has been responded to in so startling a manner.

Perhaps the Queen c<sup>ld</sup> see Mr. Gladstone on Friday at ½ past 3.

### 866 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

May 10. 1882.

Mr. Gladstone with his humble duty reports to Your Majesty that the Cabinet this day considered the heads of the important Bill they are to introduce tomorrow for strengthening the law in Ireland.

It would not be possible for Mr. Gladstone to give Your Majesty a clear and accurate account of the heads of the measure. Among them however are provisions for a special high tribunal to act without a Jury at the discretion of the Viceroy in cases not covered in summary jurisdiction: for an enlargement of the classes of offences to which such jurisdiction shall apply: for the seizure and confiscation of all copies of newspapers containing matter of certain descriptions: for fining districts where crimes occur: for amending the Jury laws with a view to greater certainty of punishment: for search to discover arms or documents in connection with Secret Societies: and other matters. The act to be for three years.

The Cabinet also considered whether Lord Granville should address the Government of the United States<sup>l</sup> on the subject of the

Assassination—Literature of that country and inquire whether any reply may be expected to the dispatch of last year. The Cabinet are of opinion that such a dispatch should be written and sent.

867

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

(Partly printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 295-6.)

BUCKINGHAM PALACE. May 11. 1882.

The Queen has to acknowledge Mr. Gladstone's 2 letters both rec<sup>d</sup> yesterday.<sup>1</sup>

She rejoices to hear that a vigorous measure & one wh<sup>h</sup> will enable criminals to be tried with a chance of conviction—& wh<sup>h</sup> will give much greater power for the prevention of crime is to be brought in today.

The whole Country cries out for it & the Queen trusts that it will be pushed through rapidly & energetically.—

While this horrible & daring murder of 2 valuable & excellent men & public Servants—perpetrated in a most unexampled manner, has brought the danger of the present state of Ireland & the necessity for action—home to every one—we must not forget how many lives had already been sacrificed—tho' their names were hardly known, & how many humbler homes have been rendered desolate—like those we have so deeply to sympathize with now.—

The Queen prefers not entering into Mr. Gladstone's first letter because she fears she cannot alter the opinion she expressed to him the day before yesterday.

This must have been a vy trying day at Chatsworth.

The Queen hopes that a pension will be given to poor Miss Burke who was wholly dependent on her Brother.

Has Mr. Gladstone seen a dreadful acc<sup>t</sup> of a Meeting in Ireland & of a Speech of a Priest dated May 5—in the *Ulster Examiner* wh<sup>h</sup> has appeared in today's papers? He sh<sup>ld</sup> read it.

868 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

May 12. 1882.

Mr. Gladstone with his humble duty intimates to Your Majesty that, unless he hears from Your Majesty to the contrary, he will

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Gladstone's second letter of May 10, 1882, is printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 293-4.

make known to Lucy Cavendish Your Majesty's sympathetic & appropriate suggestion that the spot, where her husband & Mr. Burke were cruelly murdered on the 6th of May should be marked by the erection of a cross.

869

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*WINDSOR CASTLE. *May 15. 1882.*

The Queen is glad that Mr. Gladstone intended mentioning to poor Lucy Cavendish her suggestion that a Cross sh<sup>ld</sup> be put up on the spot where poor L<sup>d</sup> Frederic & poor Mr. Burke were so ruthlessly murdered.

The absence of all reliable trace of the Assassination is vy dreadful & vy significant—& the Queen thinks no measure can be too stringent w<sup>h</sup> is likely to enable these dreadful people who murder & maim in evy direction, to be convicted & summarily punished.

There are indications again of bad spirits being in London even.

The Cross w<sup>ld</sup> naturally be put up by Govt. & c<sup>ld</sup> be either in Granite or Marble or even bronze.

The Queen thinks it sh<sup>ld</sup> be a Celtic one. She has put up a beautiful granite one at Balmoral to the memory of her beloved Child—& a vy fine one has been put up at Chislehurst to the memory of the Prince Imperial by the Inhabitants of the neighbourhood.

870 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria**May 16. 1882.*

Mr. Gladstone with his humble duty reports to Your Majesty that he has sent to Lucy Cavendish so much of Your Majesty's gracious letter as relates to the erection of a Cross on the spot of the cruel massacre in the Phoenix Park. He owns to having a doubt whether if the monument is erected by the Government it is not likely on that account to be defaced or injured by men of the same stamp that did the deed : also whether friends would not desire to raise it. He is quite sure that Your Majesty's gracious suggestion will be highly appreciated and he will be grieved if any impediment should arise.

871 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

BALMORAL CASTLE. May 26. 1882.

The Queen thanks Mr. Gladstone for his good wishes for her birthday.

She is cheered by the affection shown of so many of her family & friends & by the love & loyalty of so many of her subjects—but the alarming & almost hopeless state of Ireland weighs heavily on her.—

Mr. Gladstone's letter of the 24th did not tend to remove this anxiety—& she deeply regrets to see the mad violence of the Irish Home Rulers !

872 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

10, DOWNING STREET. 27 May. 1882.

Mr. Gladstone . . . hopes that his Parliamentary report of the 25th may have mitigated Your Majesty's anxiety, most naturally excited by the preceding report of the 24th.

Mr. Parnell's singularly skilful speech of Thursday exhibited two important facts, first his present desire (and he is not a man whose views alter without some reason for the change) to support and teach legality, secondly his triumph over the elements of disorder in his party, and his undisputed possession of its leadership.—

Mr. Dillon's alarming doctrines may now perhaps be regarded as reduced to comparative insignificance. . . .

873 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

3 June. 1882.

Am grieved to see factious opposition to prevention of Crime Bill by Irish Home rulers &c.—Ought you not to ask for declaration of urgency ?

874 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 301.)

BALMORAL CASTLE. June 10. 1882.

The Queen thanks Mr. Gladstone v<sup>y</sup> much for his regular reports. They are a'l<sup>s</sup> ! v<sup>y</sup> unsatisfactory as regards the state of affairs in the House of Commons—& the atrocious speeches of

the Home Rulers & the way in wh<sup>h</sup> they attack & abuse the measures for supressing crime are calculated to encourage *new* outrages,—wh<sup>h</sup> have already taken place! 5 murders have been perpetrated within the last 2 days!

Is it not absolutely incumbent on the Govt. *to try* to come to some agreement supported as they are in passing this most necessary Bill (wh<sup>h</sup> Ld Spencer<sup>1</sup> is in despair is *not yet passed*)—by the opposition,—to prevent obstruction—costing as it vy likely will the lives of many innocent people.

For several of the Irish Republicans (as the Home Rulers no doubt are)—have *openly declared* that putting down “boycotting” will produce increased crime.

875

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

BALMORAL CASTLE. June 13. 1882.

. . . She is glad to see that he proposes to ask for continuous sittings & *must* strongly urge him to do so without delay. The outrages are frightful & every fresh inflammable Speech from these Rebels (for what are these Home Rule Members of Parl<sup>t</sup> *but* Rebels?) tends to inflame & encourage the Irish—and to *promote* indirectly the continuation of these horrible crimes—as acts of defiance of Law & Order.

Lord Spencer is most anxious the Prevention of Crime Bill sh<sup>ld</sup> pass as speedily as possible.

The state of Egypt is vy alarming.<sup>2</sup>—

We sh<sup>ld</sup> try & get disentangled from the French.

876

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

14<sup>th</sup> June. 1882.

You will have received my letter and I can only press again most earnestly that you will ask for continuous sittings at once. Many precious lives are being endangered as precious to their families as those lost on the [6th] May. Speeches like Mr. Redmond's must lead to more murders, and I feel my poor subjects' lives must not be further imperilled.

<sup>1</sup> Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland.

<sup>2</sup> Anglo-French action in Egypt was in contemplation.



877 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

17 June. 1882.

If you are discussing progress of the Bill, I must say that, although in some important districts and classes policy of Govt has had favourable effect, state of Dublin & country as to organisation for crime is most critical. Delay of the Bill greatly adds to the difficulty of government. Every day brings me information confirming this view.

878 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

June 20-21. 1882.

Mr. Gladstone humbly offers his congratulations to Your Majesty on the return of the day marked by Your Majesty's happy accession to the throne; and with his humble duty proceeds to report that the chief part of this morning's sitting was consumed in a discussion of which the greater part was frivolous. . . .

879 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. June 24. 1882.

The Queen has to acknowledge Mr. Gladstone's reports including his congratulations on her Accession.

It has seldom fallen in a more gloomy time. Ireland in a state bordering on, if not worse than—rebellion—and Egypt & South Africa both in a very threatening state.—

The Queen must call Mr. Gladstone's attention to the language of Mr. Healy yesterday. Is such *language* abt the *Crown* to be listened to with impunity by the Govt? She thinks it has passed all bounds & is really treasonable! Is there no means of stopping language so rebellious & shocking as that wh<sup>h</sup> he used yesterday? Surely the Ministers sh<sup>d</sup> not listen to it in silence.

880 *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*(Copy in Mrs. Gladstone's ~~writing~~ *notebook*)

ETON COLLEGE. June 25th. 1882.

Mr. Gladstone with his humble duty acknowledges Your Majesty's letter of yesterday, and with respect to the speech of Mr. Healy he has to say that the part of it relating to his allegiance

and the quotation from a Jacobite song, were delivered while he was not in his place, but was otherwise occupied behind the Chair. When Mr. Healy made the quotation, he was sent for and came at once, but Mr. Healey had already passed from the subject and was proceeding on his direct assault on Mr. Bright. His words appear to have been most insolent and disloyal. Mr. Gladstone is inclined to think, if the report be correct, that they should have been noticed by the Chair. . . .

It is quite possible that Mr. Healy, who is a man of singular and apparently mixed character with a strong ruffianly element, may return to the subject, and if he does,—Mr. Gladstone will bear in mind what has already happened.

Mr. Gladstone was not aware that there had been a reference to allegiance, when he made his usual report, or he would not have failed to notice it in writing to Your Majesty.

881

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 304.)WINDSOR CASTLE. *July 1. 1882.*

The Queen thanks Mr. Gladstone for his letter rec<sup>d</sup> this ev<sup>g</sup> & is delighted to hear by Telegraph that the Bill for Prevention of Crime *has* passed thro' Committee & that these shocking Rebels were summarily dealt with. The only thing much to be regretted is that this was *not* done sooner!—It might have saved some lives!

882 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria**July 13-14. 1882.*

Mr. Gladstone presents his humble duty to Your Majesty and has to report that a real tempest of questions was discharged at the Government to-day, with respect to the condition of affairs at Alexandria,<sup>1</sup> from the benches of the Opposition and especially from the front bench, when several members (not including Sir S. Northcote or Sir R. Cross) seemed to be in rather sharp competition for the office of questioning. It was not unnatural that much curiosity should be felt. But the Government could do no more than give the information contained in the Telegrams

<sup>1</sup> Egyptian forts at Alexandria were bombarded by the British fleet, July 11, 1882.

received and sent, while they declined to answer hypothetical questions, and at last the Speaker interfered and pointed out that such questions, on subjects of such a nature, ought to be put with notice. . . .

### 883 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. July 15. 1882.

The Queen has to acknowledge Mr. Gladstone's letter rec<sup>d</sup> this ev<sup>g</sup> in wh<sup>h</sup> he announces Mr. Bright's resignation<sup>1</sup> wh<sup>h</sup> she is not surprised at ; indeed she expected it much sooner—& must say she thinks it v<sup>y</sup> strange that he sh<sup>ld</sup> choose the moment when the bombardment was over rather than when it was decided on.

### 884 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

OSBORNE. July 27. 1882.

Prince of Wales wishes to accompany expedition, Queen strongly opposed asks your opinion Prince of W[ales] says D[uke] of Cambridge and Wolseley approve.<sup>2</sup>

### 885 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

(Printed as a telegram in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 315.)

OSBORNE. July 27. 1882.

The Prince of Wales offers to serve in Egypt.

The Queen while heartily appreciating his patriotic feelings doubts very much whether it would be right for him to go—and desired me to telegraph to you and ask your opinion.

### 886 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to General Ponsonby*

[Telegram]

27 July. 1882.

Your telegram received. Precedent is against exposure to risk in such a case, and the risk might be special. The desire would be appreciated by the Country. But I think inconveniences much outweigh advantages.

### 887 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

29 July. 1882.

The Queen would be glad if you brought question of Prince of Wales before Cabinet and ask for decisive opinion from all.

<sup>1</sup> In consequence of the bombardment of Alexandria.

<sup>2</sup> This is the telegram referred to in 886. The Prince of Wales's desire to accompany the Brigade of Guards to Egypt is recorded in Sir S. Lee's *King Edward VII*, I, 457-8.

Prince of Wales proposes to go with all his equerries and hints in case of refusal that he will resign his commission and go as a civilian. Wolseley wishes to offer no personal objection ; but he and all his generals earnestly hope H.R.H. will not go.<sup>1</sup>

888 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 316.)

31 July. 1882.

What answer does the Cabinet intend to return to the insolent refusal of the Sultan to issue proclamation unless we send no troops,<sup>2</sup> and to his demands that we should evacuate Alexandria before his troops land ? Trust a very decisive one.

889 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 319.)

OSBORNE. Aug. 1. 1882.

The Queen trusts that Mr. Gladstone will do his best to meet the amendments of the House of Lords in as conciliatory a spirit as is possible, & she will be glad to have a cypher to tell her what the Govt. intend to do with respect to these amendments on the Arrears Bill.

890 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 317.)

OSBORNE. Aug. 1. 1882.

The Queen has to thank Mr. Gladstone for his regular & full reports of the H<sup>se</sup> of Commons as well as of the Cabinet—& she has seen with satisfaction the firm tone maintained by the Govt.

She trusts that we shall get clear of the Turks all together for she is *convinced* that they w<sup>ld</sup> join Arabi<sup>3</sup> ag<sup>st</sup> us,—& that our Troops w<sup>ld</sup> be exposed to treachery & fanaticism of the most fearful kind !

The Queen feels rather anxious at the opinion Mr. Gladstone reports as being “ clearly ” formed by the Govt for *non* inter-

<sup>1</sup> The Cabinet's negative advice was conveyed to the Prince of Wales in General Ponsonby's letter of July 31, 1882, printed in Sir S. Lee's *King Edward VII*, I, 458-9.

<sup>2</sup> Complications in Egypt were threatened by a possibility of Turkish intervention.

<sup>3</sup> Arabi Pasha commanded the Egyptian rebels.

ference at present ! Are we to allow Arabi's force to increase & his position to be made stronger & stronger—Christians to be murdered with impunity—& then when valuable time has been lost—our troops will have double the work & difficulty. Had we had Troops to disembark directly after the bombardment probably—*all* w<sup>ld</sup> be over before now.—

Delay & vacillation w<sup>ld</sup> be most serious—morally & materially.—

There is another point to which the Queen has already directed Mr. Gladstone's attention thro' Sir H. Ponsonby, & that is :—the great, indeed, *vital* importance of not interfering or directing Sir G. Wolseley's movements, but leaving a great deal to *his judgement & discretion*. It is well known what harm was done in bygone times by the Aulic Council interfering with & hampering the action of Generals in a campaign & now with the Telegraph wire always at hand interference, from home—& especially by Civilians might be—to say the very least—*most* injurious.—

The Queen most strongly & earnestly protests against this.

891

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

OSBORNE. August 1. 1882.

The Queen earnestly hopes that if any operations by the troops are undertaken the General officer in command in Egypt will not be hampered by orders from home.

Her Majesty feels sure you will agree in this view as you have left Sir Beauchamp Seymour<sup>1</sup> free to act as he considered best while in command at Alexandria.

892 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III 317-19)

10, DOWNING STREET. 1st Aug. 1882.

Mr. Gladstone has had the honour to receive Your Majesty's letter of this day relating to operations in Egypt, and he humbly believes he can give Your Majesty satisfactory assurances on the several points raised in it.

1. The Cabinet are firmly convinced that there can now be no Turkish intervention in the Egyptian revolution, except under conditions, both military and political, thoroughly well defined.

<sup>1</sup> Commanding the fleet.

It is idle to plead the prerogatives of a Sovereignty, which has utterly failed in the day of need, and it would be madness, in view of the efforts which this country is making and is engaged to make, to allow of any Turkish intervention which would leave to the British anything less than a complete control.

2. The non-intervention for the time, of which Mr. Gladstone spoke, had relation only to the Suez Canal, which is now open for traffic, and cannot therefore be better than it is : and thus much only in case the Canal should not be interfered with. Should it be endangered, instant action would take place.

3. Mr. Gladstone humbly assures Your Majesty that there is not, on the part of the Cabinet, the slightest disposition to fetter the judgment of the General in command. In the draft instructions considered at the last meeting there was an indication of the intended movement from the Canal upon Cairo. And this was supported by a reference to the case of Lord Raglan in 1854 who received distinct instructions, as was stated, on a variety of points, and certainly, as Mr. Gladstone well remembers, on the landing in the Crimea. But it was felt that the invasion of the Crimea had been a measure of vast responsibility, and partook of a political as well as a military character, in a word that it went beyond the sphere of pure strategy. So sensible were the Cabinet of the force of the distinction, that they struck out from the instructions the reference to the movement which was contained in the draft. They thus acted precisely in the spirit so well enforced by Your Majesty.

These were the several points touched in Your Majesty's letter.

893

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

OSBORNE. 3rd Aug. 1882.

Can we not prevent these Turkish Troops going evidently to help Arabi, or if not, to create complications. Your letter to me strongly objects, but still it appears that they are going.

894

*General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

OSBORNE. 8 August. 1882.

The Queen has been informed that at the Hamilton Sale there are some very valuable books to be sold which Her Majesty hopes may be purchased for the British Museum and not allowed to be taken out of the Country.

}

The Queen hears that the Treasury have behaved in a liberal manner about the Pictures and trusts that a similar liberality may be extended to the Books.

**895**                    *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 329-30.)

OSBORNE. *August 24. 1882.*

The Queen commands me to ask you if you think she can say anything to mark her disapproval of the dangerous Alpine excursions which this year have occasioned so much loss of life.

**896 (Copy)** *Mr. Gladstone to General Ponsonby*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 330.)

IWERNE MINSTER. *25th August. 1882.*

I do not wonder that the Queen's sympathetic feelings have again been excited by the accidents, so grave in character and so accumulated during recent weeks on the Alps. But I doubt the possibility of any interference even by Her Majesty, with a prospect of advantage. It may be questionable whether upon the whole mountain climbing (and be it remembered that Snowdon has its victims as well as the Matterhorn) is more destructive than various other pursuits in the way of recreation with perhaps no justification to plead so respectable as that which may be alleged on behalf of mountain expeditions. The question, however, is not one of wisdom or unwisdom, but viewing it as you put it, upon its very definite and simple grounds, I see no room for action. My attempt at yachting came to grief, and the chance of renewing it is small.

**897 (Copy)** *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

*Aug. 28. 1882.*

Mr. Gladstone humbly offers his congratulations to Your Majesty on the Duke of Connaught's personal safety, and professional distinction: and he can well conceive Your Majesty's satisfaction with the success thus far vouchsafed to British arms in Egypt.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Duke of Connaught commanded the Brigade of Guards in Egypt

898

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

OSBORNE. Aug. 30. 1882.

The Queen had been intending all these days to thank Mr. Gladstone for the Candle Reflector wh<sup>h</sup> arrived safely & throws an admirable light, but was too much pressed for time. She thanks Mr. Gladstone now vy much for it & also for the letter rec<sup>d</sup> yesterday & for his congratulations on the safety SO FAR of her beloved Child—& the brilliant success of her brave Troops,—with comparatively very small loss.<sup>1</sup> But the enemy seems very determined & each fresh battle makes her heart sink within her & haunt her nights with painful apprehensions.

The Queen is g<sup>thly</sup> alarmed at the acceptance of the Turkish Convention as she is *sure* they will play us false l—But she trusts the delay before all can be settled & the difficulties, besides vy stringent conditions as to what they are to do—may prevent any real mischief. . . .

899

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

31 Aug. 1882.

Am very anxious about landing of the Turks at Alexandria where we have now such small forces. Any treachery on their part would imperil our position in Egypt.

900

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

1 September. 1882.

Till now I have so entirely approved your action. Can not understand with weakened forces at Alexandria and knowledge of utter falseness of the Sultan how you can change and give way—protest in the strongest manner against landing at Alexandria it may be involve us in warfare with Turkey and lose many lives.

901

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

BALMORAL CASTLE. Sept. 4. 1882.

. . . With respect to the landing of Turkish Troops—the sudden *collapse* of our *firm* attitude with regard to the Military

<sup>1</sup> The British cavalry had been successfully engaged at Kassassin, August 28, 1882.



Convention, had already alarmed the Queen g<sup>tly</sup>; *for* she cannot see *why* we sh<sup>ld</sup> believe the Sultan the least more *now* than *before* & when there seemed a *question* of their *landing* at Alexandria *also* being likely to be *given way* to,—she was *terrified* !—

Mr. Gladstone speaks of wishing to support Ld. Dufferin<sup>1</sup> ! Most undoubtedly—in his firm attitude towards the Sultan, & Porte—but *not* to the risk of the lives of the Khedive & of our Troops. How can Mr. Gladstone or anyone believe that the Sultan is *sincere now* ? Has he given *one single* proof of *sincerity* & honesty ? Why therefore believe him now & run the risk of grievous danger to our Troops—in allowing the Turks to land anywhere but where they are perfectly safe ? Even on the Canal they will have to be watched, & with the g<sup>t</sup> difficulties & fearful risks already entailed on her poor brave Troops—g<sup>tly</sup> from the g<sup>t</sup> want of efficient Transport—the Queen considers this a g<sup>t</sup> evil !

The Queen hopes that they will after all *not* be ready to land, & in the meantime the Proclamation has not been issued.

Has Mr. Gladstone read this in Friday's *Standard* ? The acc<sup>t</sup> of the Sultan almost if not entirely justifies Mr. Gladstone in calling him—as he did to her—not long ago—a scoundrel.

902

*General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

BALMORAL. September 7. 1882.

The Queen has read with pain, as she is sure you must have done, accounts of cruelties perpetrated by the Egyptians under the Khedive's orders.

As they are our allies The Queen asks whether we cannot prevent a repetition of these tortures.

Flogging and Keelhauling 3 officers.

Beatings and tortures reported in *Daily Telegraph* more than once.

903

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

BALMORAL CASTLE. Sept. 8. 1882.

The Queen has rec<sup>d</sup> Mr. Gladstone's letter,—& telegram, & is glad to see that *he* is alive to the *danger* of agreeing to the Convention w<sup>h</sup> however has become much more universal by the

<sup>1</sup> Ambassador at Constantinople.

strong protest & well grounded objections & apprehensions of the Khedive as reported by Sir E. Malet.<sup>1</sup> . . .

The Queen thinks it very possible if not even probable that the Sultan's sudden anxiety to *agree* to our wishes & to send Troops is—that he has come to a secret agreement or understanding with Arabi, to surrender to him—*over* our heads !! This w<sup>ld</sup> be fatal to *us*—& to the poor Khedive—whom we are bound to stand by—& *for whom* we are *fighting*. Besides w<sup>h</sup> *can we* go directly ag<sup>st</sup> his wishes & earnest entreaties ?

This would be *morally* wrong & contrary to all we have hitherto done ?

Of course if we c<sup>ld</sup> *trust* the Sultan & his Army their co-operation w<sup>ld</sup> be a good thing—but as we *know* that we CANNOT *trust* either we *must* protect the Khedive & ourselves from (*almost certain*) treachery.

The Queen owns that she CANNOT understand Ld. Dufferin's altered language w<sup>h</sup> she thinks v<sup>y</sup> unfortunate, & w<sup>h</sup> has led us into this g<sup>t</sup> difficulty. No time is to be lost.

#### 904 (Copy) Mr. Gladstone to General Ponsonby

HAWARDEN. 9th Sept. 1882.

I had at once taken notice of the odious and revolting statements about torture in the *Daily Telegraph* and I think elsewhere ; and I am not sure that Lord Granville had not been beforehand with me in a spontaneous inquiry.

The *Daily Telegraph* from its sensational practices may not be a first-rate authority ; but the matter could not be overlooked.

I am glad to see that it is in part disposed of by a declaration from the Khedive in the papers of to-day.

#### 905

#### Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone

[Telegram]

10 Sept 1882.

On consideration I think it possible assembling Cabinet<sup>2</sup> may cause alarm. You will know best but would it not be better for you to meet simply those who are principally concerned to settle it with ?

<sup>1</sup> Consul-General in Egypt.

<sup>2</sup> As to a Turkish landing in Egypt.

906 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

[Cipher Telegram]

15 Sept. 1882.

Mr. Childers<sup>1</sup> and Lord Northbrook<sup>2</sup> being agreed that on the joyful news of today<sup>3</sup> the proper time has now arrived Mr. Gladstone humbly recommends to Your Majesty that baronies for military and naval service be forthwith offered to Sir Garnet Wolseley<sup>4</sup> and Sir Beauchamp Seymour<sup>5</sup> mail leaving today great advantage if Your Majesty could send early answer.

907 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

BALMORAL. 15th Sept. 1882.

Your cypher telegram just received. Yes certainly.

908 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

HAWARDEN. 18 Sept. 1882.

Mr. Gladstone presents his humble duty to Your Majesty, and, having this day learned that the Dean of Windsor's<sup>6</sup> very precious life is closed, he respectfully offers to Your Majesty, and from the bottom of his heart, his condolence in a grief which he knows will sorely wound Your Majesty, and in which he has himself no small share. He knows full well that in Dean Wellesley Your Majesty has lost one of the most loyal and most trusted, most devout, and wisest friends that ever stood near a throne, and in the midst of this great sorrow he can only hope and pray that it may please God, who gave him and has taken him away, to rear up from time to time, both for the Church and for the Monarchy men who may equal but hardly can excel him.

909 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

BALMORAL. 20 Sept. 1882.

Received your kind letter about our beloved Dean for which I thank you much and I will write by tonight's post.

<sup>1</sup> Secretary for War<sup>2</sup> First Lord of the Admiralty.<sup>3</sup> Victory at Tel-el-Kebir, September 13, 1882.<sup>4</sup> Commanding the troops.<sup>5</sup> Commanding the fleet.<sup>6</sup> Dean Wellesley died, September 18, 1882.

910

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 336.)BALMORAL CASTLE. *Sept. 20. 1882.*

The Queen thanks Mr. Gladstone for his kind touching letter on the loss of her dear & valued friend the Dean of Windsor which has deeply deeply grieved her. . . .

. . . *What* the loss is to her Mr. Gladstone fully estimates. He is the *last* of her old friends who were connected & bound up with the happy past & with all the joys & sorrows of her family. His tender sympathy, his comprehension of her feelings & wishes, his anxiety to save her trouble & to smoothen down all troubles & difficulties & his wise counsel made him invaluable to her & his loss is *irreparable* !

This sad event has come to darken with a heavy cloud the happiness thankfulness & pride w<sup>h</sup> filled the Queen's heart on the safety of her darling Son.<sup>1</sup>

911

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 338.)

[Telegram]

BALMORAL. 21st *Sept. 1882.*

Trust that Arabi will be handed over to Khedive, and that we shall not interfere at all events.<sup>2</sup>

Presume there is no foundation for statement in yesterday's *Times* that English lawyer is to defend him, as he would naturally be tried by Court Martial.

912 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*HAWARDEN CASTLE. *Sept. 24. 1882.*

On his return last night from the funeral of the Dean of Windsor at Strathfieldsaye, Mr. Gladstone had the honour to receive Your Majesty's letter of the 20th ; every word of which he receives with a full sense how truly it expresses Your Majesty's feelings, and how completely those feelings are warranted by the case. In truth the epithet *irreparable*, sometimes too hastily or lightly used, is the only one which adequately describes Your Majesty's present loss in the death of Dean Wellesley.

<sup>1</sup> The Duke of Connaught was on active service in Egypt.

<sup>2</sup> Arabi Pasha had surrendered in Cairo. r)

All the circumstances of the funeral appeared to Mr. Gladstone to be appropriate and soothing. The villagers, including some of great age, attended in numbers ; and all those who were gathered from a distance appeared to be deeply impressed with the occasion. . . .

Mr. Gladstone has troubled Your Majesty with these particulars at the hazard of repeating what may be better told by others, believing that everything which relates to one so deeply and so greatly loved is precious in the eyes of Your Majesty.

913 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

BALMORAL CASTLE. Sept. 27. 1882.

The Queen thanks Mr. Gladstone for his letter of the 24th & for giving her those sad details of the funeral of the dear Dean which were of such melancholy interest to her.

Naturally we all regret he c<sup>d</sup> not rest at Windsor & the Queen was unaware that he wished to be laid at Strathfieldsaye till she heard it from Mrs. Wellesley after his death.

She (Mrs. W.) herself grieves at it. But his vy strong attachment to the great Duke & his early associations with Strathfieldsaye (where the Queen first made his acquaintance in 1845) led him, it is believed, to leave this positive direction.

914 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

HAWARDEN CASTLE. Sept. 27. 1882.

Your Majesty may recollect examining with much kindness and favour, years ago, some works of Warwick Brookes,<sup>1</sup> a really remarkable man of primitive childlike character with a true view of genius. Mr. Gladstone with his humble duty ventures to send Your Majesty this little memoir, though it contains exaggerated reference to himself. In p. 5 is a curious though slight tradition of Warwick the ~~King~~ King-Maker ; in p. 11 a characteristic letter of Haydon's ; and <sup>on</sup> p. 17 a reference to the Prince Consort who appears to have detected this case of excellence at Manchester in 1857.

915 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

BALMORAL. 30 September. 1882.

May not any reduction of the forces in Egypt for some time to come place us at a disadvantage with respect to [cipher group ob-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. 329, 330, and 331.

*scure*] in arranging for future of the country? Am strongly of this opinion myself.

916

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 343-4.)

BALMORAL CASTLE. Sept 30. 1882.

The Queen has rec<sup>d</sup> Mr. Gladstone's letter of the 28th forwarding Lord Morley's<sup>1</sup> enclosure with regard to the proposed withdrawal of Troops from Egypt & she has already telegraphed to Mr. Gladstone deprecating any reduction of the Troops at present. She *cannot forget* the *unfortunate result* of the haste with which our Troops were brought back from Zululand & South Africa, & the consequent humiliation & loss of prestige w<sup>h</sup> ensued in the Transvaal.—This sh<sup>ld</sup> be a *warning* to us in the *present instance*.—The Queen feels strongly that by retaining our present force in Egypt, we shall be in a *far better* & more dignified position to take that leading part among the other Powers in arranging for the *future* of the Country, to which after all the precious blood & treasure we have spent, we are *so justly entitled* & it seems to her that if once *any* troops are *withdrawn* we shall have *no* pretext for replacing them.

The Khedive moreover has *now* absolutely *no Army*, it is *entirely* disbanded—the only semblance of a force consists of a few utterly unreliable police.—

The 12,000 Men proposed to be left in Egypt may no doubt suffice to hold Cairo & Alexandria—but are they enough to guarantee the *safety* of Christians & to *reestablish & maintain* the Khedive's authority in the various outlying districts where, to judge from constant newspaper reports, there will for *some time* to come, be so much possibility of an outbreak?

Would it not at *all events* be *unwise* to *withdraw* any troops until the result of the trial of Arabi & the other Rebels & the *effect* in the Country of the sentence passed upon them is *ascertained*?

The Queen thinks (& the Duke of Cambridge<sup>2</sup> is of the same opinion) that *under any* circumstances the *Household Cavalry* may be *at once* withdrawn.

She is explaining to Lord Morley the sense in which she is writing to Mr. Gladstone.

<sup>1</sup> Under-Secretary for War.

<sup>2</sup> Commander in Chief

917

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

BALMORAL CASTLE. Oct. 5. 1882.

The Queen has rec<sup>d</sup> another letter from the Crown P<sup>cess</sup> of Germany today ab<sup>t</sup> the Dante & sends a copy of it at *once* to Mr. Gladstone. He will see how anxious her daughter is that England sh<sup>ld</sup> possess this treasure.

## ENCLOSURE

*The Crown Princess of Germany to Queen Victoria*

NEUES PALAIS, POTSDAM. Oct. 2. 1882.

May I refer once more to the sale of the Duke of Hamilton's Library—and that precious illustration of Dante by Botticelli. I *heard yesterday* that it was again offered to the German (Berlin) Museum authorities in a lump and the auction which was to have taken place in October or November will *not* come off I suppose !

I cannot reconcile myself to the idea of this unique treasure leaving England for good—without even an *attempt* to secure it, how it will be regretted in later years !

I fear there is a great hurry about it, and that they are communicating by *telegraph*, so I hope no time will be lost—in case it is to be bought for the British Museum. They boast here of having the finest collections of England over here in a few years ! I own I shall be very sorry.

918 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

HAWARDEN. 8 Oct. 1882.

Upon receiving Your Majesty's Telegram respecting the Botticelli Dante, Mr. Gladstone at once requested information from the Principal Librarian of the British Museum : whose letter in reply, with his humble duty, Mr. Gladstone has now the honour to send. He thinks it will satisfy Your Majesty that the attention of the Trustees is fully awake to the subject, in which the Crown Princess manifests so warm and laudable an interest.

It seems not unlikely that the idea of an offer to the German Government is founded upon surmise, or on the proceedings of some private agent anxious for a commission.

The Trustees of the Museum are without doubt anxious to keep their proceedings quiet. Your Majesty remembers the case

of the James the First miniature. Whatever colour there might be for the notion that bidders would be unwilling to compete with Your Majesty, no one would suppose that any mercy would be shewn to the Trustees.

919

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 348-9).

BALMORAL CASTLE. Oct. 14. 1882.

. . . The Queen is distressed & alarmed at the g<sup>t</sup> facilities given to that Arch rebel & traitor Arabi, (who, she believes, evy one, including Mr. Gladstone himself wish sh<sup>ld</sup> meet with the punishment he deserves)—to defend himself—or rather to save him—for those who might be ready to speak the truth, will be intimidated by the fear of displeasing England!! The Queen recognises the legal difficulty wh, she must own, she thinks we have got ourselves into, by the condition laid down on the 8th of Sept:—It seems to the Queen that we are acting vy strangely—& doing a g<sup>t</sup> deal in one direction, while we undo the effect we wish to produce, by appearing to *protect* the vy man we sent out our best Troops & spent much treasure to *defeat*: *This* will be totally misunderstood *in the East*! Customs, law, feelings—are all as different from *ours*—as the sun is from the moon! And *why* in the world should *Englishmen* defend this wicked man, who is the cause of thousands of innocent lives being *lost* & many poor people maimed for life! Is this right, & wise? Did not Mr. Gladstone himself repeatedly tell the Queen he thought he deserved the extreme penalty of the law? There is of course nothing to be said against his having a fair trial as any other Oriental but it seems to the Queen as if all the *delay* wh is being caused by this g<sup>t</sup> anxiety to facilitate his defence by an Englishman (!!!) will do incalculable mischief—& we may see fresh disturbances break out in Egypt if the *English Govt* & a small portion of radicals & others in England actuated by a morbid sentimentality—appear to be so intensely interested in a Man—who betrayed his Sovereign & is *certainly indirectly* if not even directly the cause of the loss of life of so many Europeans on the 10th of June,—in the burning of Alexandria & in the false use of the flag of Truce?

If he sh<sup>ld</sup> not be found *guilty* (wh is to be apprehended) he is at any rate *guilty* of rebellion & crime of many kinds—& imprisonment for life ought to be his fate.



The Queen feels sure Mr. Gladstone c<sup>d</sup> not wish this nation to stultify itself by allowing Arabi—if acquitted of the worst crimes for w<sup>h</sup> he is to be tried, to come here & be *lionised* & made a Hero of—as Cattawayo<sup>1</sup> was.

She wishes to call Mr. Gladstone's *attention* to this very serious question, w<sup>h</sup> must *not* be judged with a *view* to pleasing people in this Country but to our permanent great interests in the East.

920

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

BALMORAL. 15 October. 1882.

Have to thank you for your letter just received. Am glad to find you have not changed your opinion as you will see from my letter of yesterday I feared you might have done. Still think Govt are unnecessarily facilitating defence.

921

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

BALMORAL CASTLE. Oct. 21. 1882.

The Queen thinks that before the Patents for Sir B. Seymour & Sir G. Wolseley's Peerages are made out—the titles sh<sup>d</sup> be reconsidered.

Alcester of Alcester seems quite out of place. L<sup>d</sup> Seymour of Alexandria w<sup>d</sup> [be] the right thing.

Almost evy Title given for distinguished Services have *some* distinctive name attached to them. For instance : L<sup>d</sup>. St. Vincent : L<sup>d</sup> Nelson of Trafalgar & the Nile & L<sup>d</sup> Harris of Seringapatam, L<sup>d</sup>. Harding of Lahore, L<sup>d</sup> Napier of Magdala, the Duke of Wellington—L<sup>d</sup> Douro—& L<sup>d</sup> Wellington of Talavera—Sir G. Wolsley sh<sup>d</sup> not be as the papers suggest, L<sup>d</sup> Wolsley of *Egypt* but *clearly* L<sup>d</sup> Wolsley of Tel-el-Kebir with w<sup>h</sup> most brilliant victory *his* name will *ever* be *connected*. . . .

922

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 352.)

BALMORAL CASTLE. Oct. 23. 1882.

. . . With respect to Egypt & the trial of Arabi she will not argue any further but still thinks it was a pity we had anything to do with the management of the trial. The Queen trusts that Mr.

<sup>1</sup> Cetewayo of Zululand.

Gladstone will impress upon *all* the Ministers the absolute necessity for reticence on the affairs of Egypt & above all not to *commit* the Govt to any thing like a promise of evacuating Egypt soon—or of interfering with Arabi's sentence, or as what may be necessary as regards the relation of that Country to the Sultan.—

The Queen feels sure Mr. Gladstone & L<sup>d</sup> Granville will give only *vy* general answers—& insist on no partial discussion before any plan has been agreed on.—

Regarding the *real* object of the meeting of Parlt *now*—the Queen *w<sup>ld</sup>* have thought that some sort of agreement—or at least some communication with the Opposition *w<sup>h</sup>* might tend to a compromise *w<sup>ld</sup>* have been *vy* desirable.—

She trusts however to hear further on this subject from Mr. Gladstone.

923

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

BALMORAL CASTLE. Oct. 28. 1882.

The Queen in thanking Mr. Gladstone for his letters wishes to express her gratification at the expression he used with regard to her beloved son,<sup>1</sup> which he well deserves.—It is to be regretted that there was any departure even despicable as it was, from the unanimity *w<sup>h</sup>* such an occasion <sup>a</sup> called forth, but alas! in these days, when extreme radicalism & almost republicanism will make itself heard—one cannot be surprised at such bad taste & want of good feeling.

In the midst of all that has been so admirably planned & carried out in this short but brilliant Campaign—there is one painful blot—& that is the very defective medical arrang<sup>ts</sup>. The War Office say it is all exaggeration & the Queen herself hoped it was so, but she grieves to say she hears more & more of the want of attention to the poor wounded—the want of attention on the part of the Doctors (*not* the few remaining Regimental ones) & the *vy* g<sup>t</sup> neglect on board *some* of the ships, *w<sup>h</sup>* no doubt has caused the deaths of several of the poor sufferers. There ought to be a thoroughly searching enquiry & the system (the new one) examined.

And there sh<sup>ld</sup> be no attempt to conceal facts of *w<sup>h</sup>* there is no doubt.

<sup>1</sup> The Duke of Connaught.<sup>2</sup> Vote of thanks to the forces in Egypt

The Queen thinks the state of Egypt very serious—and the movements of this new false Prophet<sup>1</sup> require careful watching.

924 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

BALMORAL. Nov. 1. 1882.

. . . Would be wise for you without delay to see Sir G. Wolseley on the subject of the Medical Department, and critical state of feeling in Egypt. . . .

925 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 326-7.)

BALMORAL. Nov. 1. 1882.

The Queen is sorry to see that in your letter of the 31st of October you have adopted the view taken by the Secretary of State for War that the complaints against the medical department in Egypt were made on frivolous grounds by officers unused to the rude experience of War.

Although it would be unfair on the medical officers to admit the truth of any of the allegations made without full enquiry, is it not ungenerous if not unjust on those who have endured unusual hardships, to accuse them of making exaggerated statements in this matter?

The Queen's earnest desire is that the freest investigation should take place but as Mr. Childers<sup>2</sup> reproved Colonel Milne Home in Parliament for asking questions on this subject, it is to be feared that officers and men will not run the risk of offending the Secretary of State by coming forward before the Committee.

The Queen hopes that you will hear what Sir Garnet Wolseley has to say on this subject and thinks you will admit that there have been very fair grounds for the complaints that have been made.

Her Majesty supposes you will no doubt consult Sir Garnet on the state of affairs in Egypt which Her Majesty thinks are critical.

926 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

Nov. 2. 1882.

Mr. Gladstone with his humble duty acknowledges the Telegram which he had the honour to receive yesterday from Your

<sup>1</sup> Insurrection of Mohammed Ahmed, the Mahdi, in the Sudan.

<sup>2</sup> Secretary for War.

Majesty, and reports that he has had an opportunity of conversing with Sir G. Wolseley on the subject of the proposed inquiry into the efficiency of the medical depts. He found that Sir G. Wolseley, having become acquainted with the composition of the body, to which the inquiry will be committed, deems it to be quite satisfactory.

927

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*[*Telegram*]

WINDSOR CASTLE. Nov. 28th. 1882.

I am horrified at these rapidly succeeding murders.

What steps do the Government mean to take with respect to the very alarming state of Dublin?

928

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. Dec. 7. 1882.

. . . The Queen does not think Ceylon a good place for Arabi to be sent to—as he is not to be shut up. He might do g<sup>t</sup> mischief amongst the Mussulmans. Fiji w<sup>ld</sup> be far better & she hopes that will be adopted.

929

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*[*Telegram*]

WINDSOR CASTLE. December 10th. 1882.

I have already written to you my reasons against sending Arabi to Ceylon. Would not Hongkong or the Andaman Islands be safer?

930

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. Sunday night 10/12. 1882.

Though the Queen will see Mr. Gladstone tomorrow she thinks it may facilitate a decision on the all important decision w<sup>h</sup> will have to be come to now—as to who is to succeed the beloved & excellent Archbishop of Canterbury,<sup>1</sup> if she wri<sup>es</sup> these few lines.

She has thought a great deal about it—& feels *convinced* that to place a man of only 52, excellent as he is above all the older Bishops w<sup>ld</sup> create a vy bad & angry feeling in the Church & that the Bishop of Winchester<sup>2</sup> is far the fittest to be appointed *now*. He c<sup>ld</sup> resign in 2 years if he were unable to go on—but for that

<sup>1</sup> Archbishop Tait died, December 3, 1882.<sup>2</sup> Bishop Browne.

time he surely <sup>cld</sup> undertake it—& sh<sup>ld</sup> be pressed to do so. In the *last* letter dear Dean Wellesley ever wrote to the Queen only 16 days before his death he spoke of this—as the best arrang<sup>t</sup> & said he thought Mr. Gladstone likewise thought so.

The dear Archbishop, by what Mr. Davidson <sup>1</sup> wrote & told the Queen, certainly hoped this.<sup>2</sup>

The Bishop of Truro <sup>3</sup> sh<sup>ld</sup> go to Winchester, w<sup>h</sup> is far harder work than the Archiepiscopal See.—

The Queen was vy much struck by Mr. Davidson with whom she had a long interview yesterday. He is singularly pleasing both in appearance & manner; very sympathetic & evidently vy intelligent, wise & able.

931

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE, Dec. 12. 1882.

. . . She asked Ld. Hartington to speak to Mr. Gladstone on the subject of the proposed changes in the Gov<sup>t</sup> & the addition of L<sup>d</sup> Derby & Sir C. Dilke.<sup>4</sup>

The Queen must again refer to the Speeches of Sir C. Dilke w<sup>h</sup> though spoken ten years ago, contain statements w<sup>h</sup> have never been withdrawn. Mr. Gladstone in then replying lamented his Republican tendencies—& Sir C. Dilke *avowed* his Anti Monarchical principles.—

Does he still maintain these views? If so, he *cannot* be a *Minister* in the Govt of a *Monarchy*.

Has he changed his principles? If so, there *can* be *no difficulty* in *avowing* it *publicly*.

932 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

Dec. 13. 1882.

Mr. Gladstone regrets that Your Majesty has had the trouble of writing about the case of Sir C. Dilke before Mr. Gladstone's letter of yesterday reached Your Majesty.

He humbly recalls to Your Majesty's memory that the explanations given on the formation of the present Government were

<sup>1</sup> Rev. Randall Davidson

<sup>2</sup> Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 365-6.

<sup>3</sup> Bishop Benson.

<sup>4</sup> It was proposed that Lord Derby should become Colonial Secretary and Sir C. Dilke President of the Local Government Board.

graciously taken at the time to have effaced or covered what had previously passed. But should Your Majesty determine to enter upon that subject, Mr. Gladstone would humbly pray that Your Majesty would direct him to be particularly informed what are the actual declarations in their terms, on which Mr. Gladstone is to proceed in a further application to Sir C. Dilke.

The communications in 1880 were conducted by Lord Granville.

933

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 378)

WINDSOR CASTLE. Dec. 14. 1882.

The Queen has read with *no* surprise, but with much displeasure—IF he really IS to enter the Cabinet, *surely* L<sup>d</sup> Derby's Speech at Manchester, his observations abt Egypt—& Madagascar fully bear out what the Queen told Mr. Gladstone abt Ld Derby's observation: "Let Egypt take care of itself."

Mr. Gladstone will introduce a most disagreeable & irresolute, timid Minister into his Cabinet—if he really offers Ld Derby a place in it.

The Queen w<sup>ld</sup> far rather see Sir C. Dilke in the Cabinet than Ld Derby, for the former *has right* views on foreign Politics & knows what the honour of this Country requires.

After that Speech the Queen does not see *what* Office Ld Derby c<sup>ld</sup> hold with safety.

She sends it in case Mr. Gladstone sh<sup>ld</sup> not have read it.

934 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 380.)

[Telegram]

15 Dec. 1882.

It gratifies me much to say that Lord Derby at once conforms to Your Majesty's desire. I have proposed him accordingly to come to Windsor tomorrow and be sworn as Secretary for the Colonies. I humbly ask early reply by telegraph as the time is short. Will have the honour of coming to the Council.

935

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 380.)

[Telegram]

WINDSOR CASTLE. 15<sup>th</sup> Dec. 1882.

Lord Derby may come tomorrow. I cannot express how painful it is for me to receive him again as my Minister under such very

different circumstances.<sup>1</sup> He cannot expect a cordial reception, but it is a great thing he does not go to India.

936

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. Dec. 17. 1882.

. . . She w<sup>ld</sup> wish to repeat in writing what she said to him yesterday—viz: that she objects as much to Mr. Chamberlain's appt to the Duchy of Lancaster<sup>a</sup> as she did to Sir C. Dilke's & w<sup>ld</sup> desire to have some one of moderate opinions—who need not be in the Cabinet (if inconvenient) as has frequently been the case.

937 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

HAWARDEN CASTLE. Dec. 18. 1882.

Mr. Gladstone has had the honour to receive Your Majesty's letter of yesterday, and he returns with his humble thanks the letter of Lord Spencer,<sup>a</sup> whose judgment on the recent commutation of sentence appears to him to be sound.

With regard to the Chancellorship of the Duchy Mr. Gladstone will do his best to meet Your Majesty's wishes, but he finds the situation to be one of some difficulty, and he humbly asks leave to remind Your Majesty of what has occurred.

1. When Sir Charles Dilke was proposed for the Duchy, Your Majesty stated as an obstacle his language at a former period as a critic of the Civil List and Royal Establishments.

2. Mr. Gladstone humbly hoped that this obstacle was removed by proposing Mr. Chamberlain for the Duchy inasmuch as he had never taken part, as is believed, in any such criticisms.

3. Your Majesty suggests, that the Chancellor of the Duchy be a person of moderate opinions (by which Mr. Gladstone understands not belonging to the Radical section of the Liberal party) and need not be in the Cabinet.

4. When the Cabinet was formed, it included three Ministers reputed to belong to the Radical section (Mr. Bright, Mr. Forster, Mr. Chamberlain)—Of these three, Mr. Chamberlain alone remains; and the addition made to the Cabinet in the person of Lord Derby is an addition drawn from the other wing of the party.

<sup>1</sup> He had resigned from Mr. Disraeli's Government in 1878.

<sup>a</sup> It was proposed to appoint Mr. Chamberlain Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster; but the proposal was dropped.

<sup>b</sup> Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland.

5. Without doubt the Duchy may be held by a person not in the Cabinet ; but there are now seven Peers and six Commoners in the Cabinet, instead of eight Commoners and six Peers as the Cabinet was originally composed under Your Majesty's sanction, so that Your Majesty will not be surprised when Mr. Gladstone humbly points out that it is now requisite to add a Commoner to the Cabinet.

6. Although Mr. Chamberlain has not yet like Mr. Bright undergone the mollifying influence of age and experience, his leanings on Foreign policy and other important questions would be far more acceptable to Your Majesty than those of Mr. Bright, while Mr. Gladstone is not aware that his views are in principle more democratic.

7. Mr. Gladstone is conscious that there is one serious disadvantage in the removal of Mr. Chamberlain from his present office.<sup>1</sup> As he fills it with great ability, the removal would perhaps be the subject of remark and might be treated, which Your Majesty probably would not desire, as indicating some personal objection of Your Majesty's, while it might possibly somewhat fetter Sir Charles Dilke's freedom in the avowal which, as Your Majesty is aware, he intends to make. . . .

Before closing, Mr. Gladstone ventures to submit to Your Majesty that Sir Charles Dilke, who is young and has probably a long future before him, appears to him to be a person singularly amenable : one, who has learnt much, and will learn more—Your Majesty will probably have observed that he has made way with the Prince of Wales : and reflection rather confirms Mr. Gladstone in his impression that, were the preliminaries<sup>1</sup> once removed, Sir Charles Dilke might be found to give Your Majesty considerable satisfaction.

Mr. Gladstone humbly submits these remarks and circumstances to Your Majesty's gracious consideration.

938

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) II, 382.)

OSBORNE, Dec. 21. 1882.

The Queen is very anxious to draw Mr. Gladstone's serious attention to the belief<sup>1</sup> which seems to prevail that Lord Derby is to

<sup>1</sup> President of the Board of Trade.



influence the foreign policy of the Govt & that the result will be a retrograde course as to Egypt & as to England's position in & out of Europe, Lord Granville's health not being good & he unable to work as much as formerly & the probable loss of Sir C. Dilke at the Foreign Office where he helped, she believes, to keep up a vigorous action wh<sup>ch</sup> tend to encourage this belief. The Queen does not share this fear—at the same time she thinks it most *important* to warn Mr. Gladstone against Lord Derby's views of which she has had so much sad experience & to express a sincere hope that he w<sup>ld</sup> *not* let himself & Lord Granville on *any* acc<sup>t</sup> be influenced in foreign politics by Lord Derby. . . .

939 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 382-3)

HAWARDEN CASTLE Dec. 22. 1882.

Mr. Gladstone . . . ventures to assure Your Majesty that in his firm opinion no apprehension need be entertained of the effect upon our Foreign Policy of Lord Derby's entry into the Cabinet.

On Foreign questions, not connected with peace or war, Lord Derby will doubtless give his opinions with the weight which must attach to his long experience in the Foreign Office.

On questions of peace or war, it may be that he is by a shade, or by some shades, nearer to the views of Mr. Bright than the other members of the Cabinet. Yet it is certain that he would not go anything like the length of Mr. Bright in such matters: and yet ev<sup>er</sup> Mr. Bright agreed to all the proceedings of last Spring ap<sup>art</sup> m<sup>er</sup> down to the orders<sup>1</sup> which unhappily brought about his r<sup>es</sup>ignation. In regard to personal composition, the Cabinet must<sup>d</sup> be deemed a little less pacific now than it was at the period of its first formation: and there has been time enough to mark out ge<sup>nerally</sup> its line for the future from its proceedings in the past.

Mr. Gladstone<sup>d</sup> has also the pleasure to add that although Lord Granville's health may be in some trifling degree weaker than at former periods, Mr. Gladstone himself is not able to detect any decline in the tact and vigour which he applies to the discharge of his manifold and sometimes bewildering duties: duties in which he does not believe it is possible, or at least easy for any Political

{ } <sup>1</sup> For the bombardment of Alexandria.

Under-Secretary, however able, to afford him any very extensive relief. . . .

940 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

28th Dec. 1882

Pray remember that I accepted Sir C. Dilke on condition he took an early public opportunity [of] making recantation or explanation of his former crude opinions.

941 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

OSBORNE. December 28. 1882.

Sir Charles Dilke was sworn in today<sup>1</sup>—and as far as one could judge in the few minutes I saw—he made a favourable impression.

But the Queen again desired me to remind you—as she did this morning by telegraph that she had accepted him on the condition that he should say something publicly to explain away his crude ideas.

May I heartily wish you joy of your birthday and express a hope that you may enjoy very many more of them.

942 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

OSBORNE Dec. 31. 1882.

The Queen wishes Mr. & Mrs. Gladstone & their family a happy New Year.

She has written to the poor Duchess of Bedford<sup>2</sup> who is in despair at being forced by her strange Husband to resign.—She cannot help *suspecting* the <sup>fact</sup> is Sir Charles Dilke's appointment w<sup>h</sup> has led to this.

This gentleman has ~~not yet~~ <sup>not</sup> fulfilled the *condition* on which (as Mr. Gladstone will remember) the *Queen alone* consented to admit him into the Cabinet.

It will be *very* serious if he does not do this.—

The Queen will write to the Duchess of Roxburgh in 2 or 3 days.—

The appointment of the Bishop of Truro to the Archbishopric of Canterbury<sup>3</sup> seems to cause universal satisfaction, amongst the Laity—& among the greater part of the Clergy.

<sup>1</sup> As President of the Local Government Board.

<sup>2</sup> Mistress of the Robes.

<sup>3</sup> Archbishop Benson.

943 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

HAWARDEN CASTLE. Jan. 2. 1883.

Mr. Gladstone gratefully acknowledges Your Majesty's kind wishes on the New Year, and prays leave to return them cordially with his humble duty. . . .

With regard to Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Gladstone has only before him the newspaper report of the words used by him on Friday last, and also the words in which Mr. Gladstone conveyed an assurance to Your Majesty as to the sense in which he believed Sir Charles Dilke was to speak. He believes that Sir Charles Dilke conceived himself, when using the word scatter-brained as to his own early proceedings, to be going quite as far as Mr. Gladstone had engaged himself to Your Majesty that he would go.

He is also informed that Sir Charles Dilke's words have been very widely construed by the Press as amounting to and conveying a reconsideration of his crude ideas.

Mr. Gladstone admits to Your Majesty in the most unequivocal manner that he himself is bound to Your Majesty to the full extent of the words under which he obtained Your Majesty's consent. . . .

944 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*(Partly printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 395)

OSBORNE. Jan. 5. 1883.

. . . Respecting Sir C. Dilke the Queen has asked Sir Henry Ponsonby to answer him.

The Queen has ~~no~~ confidence in Sir C. Dilke as yet & his conduct & language will be very carefully watched by her, & she would indeed be glad if he could prove himself worthy of her confidence.

The Queen is sure that Mr. Gladstone will not misunderstand her, when she expresses her earnest hope that he will be very guarded in his language when he goes to Scotland shortly—& that he will remember the immense importance attached to *every* word falling from him; words spoken are often the cause of difficulties hereafter. Mr. Gladstone will remember that when she first saw him in 80—when she asked him to form a Govt—she expressed her regret at some of his Speeches in Midlothian, & he replied that he did *not then* think himself *a responsible person*.—

Still every thing he then said has been quoted as tho' he were so—& the Queen feels very anxious that he sh<sup>ld</sup> not *now* bind himself to any particular course wh<sup>a</sup> afterwards he might find it difficult *not* to pursue.

There is g<sup>t</sup> apprehension ab<sup>t</sup> the Established Church, in Scotland—about the tenure of Land—the lowering of the Franchise &c. A few words discouraging wild & extravagant notions—spoken by the Prime Minister would have an excellent effect. Is it not rather venturesome for Mr. Gladstone to undertake such a visit at this time of year—& with so short a time of rest before him—moreover not having been well ?

945 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

OSBORNE. *January 5. 1883.*

The explanation made by Sir Charles Dilke in 1880 was a private one and what The Queen wished was that he should now make some public declaration to the same effect. But if you are satisfied that his private renunciation of republican ideas expresses his true convictions The Queen will not insist on any further reference to the subject in his speeches.

Her Majesty hopes you will keep a watch on his conduct and language and if these prove that he has abandoned his crude ideas The Queen will gladly recognise the fact.

The Queen does not object to any one holding republican or levelling views, but Her Majesty does object to such men taking office under a Crown.

946 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to General Ponsonby*

HAWARDEN. *6th January. 1883.*

The second post brings in your second note of yesterday, for which I feel very thankful to Her Majesty. I have read the report of Sir C. Dilke's Speech of last night when he reverts to this point : best given in the *Standard*. He now refers to the renunciation of crude ideas as made in his own person. This I think can and will receive no other interpretation than in reference to what he said of republican government : and I am convinced it is quite as effectual as if he had verbally repeated the ~~1~~ notions renounced, and far less invidious and likely to promote reaction, which (forgive severance) usually ends in the throwing of dirt.

947 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 396)

HAWARDEN CASTLE. Jan. 7. 1883.

Mr. Gladstone presents his humble duty and humbly thanks Your Majesty for the kind letter which he has received today.

He need only trouble Your Majesty with a very brief reply, not simply because the post hour is at hand ; but also because the principal subject has been put aside by circumstances.

Having of late been disturbed in sleep in a manner not so unusual he believes with others as with him, and the disturbance having much increased within a week, he apprised Dr. Andrew Clark who has kindly come down from London this afternoon, and who reports that the journey to Midlothian must be given up.

He treats the case without hesitation as one of accidental and temporary derangement, which a little cure and rest may probably dispose of before the meeting of Parliament. If in further conversations anything material should come into view, Mr. Gladstone will take the liberty of reverting to the subject. . . .

Mr. Gladstone was struck with Your Majesty's discriminating suggestion, which has been remarkably corroborated by the judgment of his physician.

948 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 396-7.)

HAWARDEN CASTLE. Jan. 8. 1883

Mr. Gladstone . . . in prosecution of his letter of yesterday, apprises Your Majesty that the direction of Dr. Clark, which in the first place involved the abandonment of the intended journey to the North, was to the effect that Mr. Gladstone should as far as possible abstain from public business until the Session of Parliament. It remains to be considered whether he should during a portion of the interval absent himself from Hawarden or possibly from this country ; but in any case he makes the experiment of remaining at Hawarden for a few days. Dr. Clark has now returned to London.

In Your Majesty's very kind reference on the 5th to his former visits to Midlothian, and to his own observations on the 24th April 1880, Your Majesty remarked that he had said he did not

then think himself a responsible person? He prays leave to fill up the outline which these words convey by saying he at that time (to the best of his recollection) humbly submitted to Your Majesty his admission that he must personally bear the consequences of all that he had said, and that he thought some things suitable to be said by a person out of office which could not suitably be said by a person in office; also that as is intimated by Your Majesty's words the responsibilities of the two positions severally were different.

With respect to the political changes named by Your Majesty Mr. Gladstone conceives that the very safe measure of extending to the Counties the franchise enjoyed by the Boroughs stands in all likelihood for early consideration: but he doubts whether there can be any serious dealing of a general character with the Land Laws by the present Parliament, and so far as Scottish disestablishment is concerned he does not conceive that that question has made progress during recent years; and he may state that in making arrangements recently for his expected visit to Midlothian he had received various overtures for Deputations on this subject, which he had been able to put aside.

949

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 397-8.)

OSBORNE. Jan. 10. 1883.

The Queen thanks Mr. Gladstone for 3 letters & is very sorry to hear of his indisposition & sleeplessness—<sup>wh</sup> is but too common a result of overwork & very exhausting.—

But he must be *really quiet* & not occupy himself at *all* with affairs & not with *long* letters like the one he did yesterday. Perfect quiet is ordered & the prescription ought to be thoroughly obeyed & followed.

When the Queen wrote she was not aware of this new feature in Mr. Gladstone's health and thought he had only been suffering from a chill —

The Queen had a good deal of conversation yesterday with the Bishop of Truro<sup>1</sup> & was most favourably impressed with him in every way: mind, heart & vigour of constitution! . . .

<sup>1</sup> Archbishop Benson.

950 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*HAWARDEN CASTLE. *Jan. 12. 1883.*

Mr. Gladstone humbly thanks Your Majesty for the kind letter of the 10th and its judicious suggestions on which he will do his best to act under the guidance of Dr. Clark. . . .

951 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*10, DOWNING STREET. [*Jan. 15. 1883.*]

With much reluctance Mr. Gladstone prays in the regular course to be allowed to leave the kingdom for a short time, Dr. Clark having given his final judgment to that effect, and it being hoped to depart early tomorrow.

952 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*[*Telegram*]OSBORNE. 16th *Jan. 1883.*

I have just received your telegram and readily grant you the permission to go abroad Hoping the rest (which ought to be complete) from all work may have the desired effect.

953 *Queen Victoria to Mrs. Gladstone*[*Telegram*]OSBORNE. *Jan. 16. 1883.*

Many thanks for your telegram Have at once answered Mr. Gladstone But am very anxious to know who will act for him in his absence as he ought to do nothing while away.

954 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*WINDSOR CASTLE. *March 4. 1883.*

As The Queen believes that the question of the Indian Guard will be mentioned in the Cabinet tomorrow, Her Majesty desires that you should know she is much interested in it and hopes that the proposal will be favorably received, Lord Ripon<sup>1</sup> does not appear to object to it and the general feeling of those who The Queen has spoken to is in favor of it.

The only question on which Her Majesty is not well informed, is that of the views of the Indian soldiers themselves. One of the objects of having the Guard at Court was to do them honor, and it would be desirable to ascertain if this is appreciated by them.

<sup>1</sup> Governor-General of India.

955 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

10, DOWNING STREET. 10 March. 1883.

. . . The result of the inquiries of Lord Kimberley<sup>1</sup> tends to sustain the opinion reported by Mr. Gladstone last Saturday, that any arrangement for the appointment of an Indian Body Guard or Guard of honour for the Sovereign would require the sanction of an Act of Parliament. . . .

956 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. March 12. 1883.

The Queen wishes that you should know she is much disappointed at the decision of the Cabinet respecting the Indian Guard, though Her Majesty agrees that it would not have been advisable to apply to Parliament on the subject at present.

957 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

BUCKINGHAM PALACE. March 13. 1883.

The Queen is surprised to see that Mr. Gladstone is said to have announced in Parliament that Lord Spencer was about to resign the Presidency of the Council, not having heard any thing of this from him.—

Is this so?—

The Queen is also anxious to know what course Mr. Gladstone intends to take on Mr. Parnell's motion tomorrow.

958 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. March 17. 1883.

In returning this submission w<sup>h</sup> the Queen has approved, she wishes to observe that she had a letter from Lord Spencer yesterday in which he says that, while he feels a change of Govt in Ireland at present w<sup>ld</sup> do harm, & while he is ready to remain at his post—he trusts it may not be for vy long & that possibly in the autumn a change might take place.\*

Mr. Gladstone sh<sup>ld</sup> bear these observations in mind.

The Queen is much surprised at Mr. Gladstone's not having alluded in his letter to the frightful explosion & outrage w<sup>h</sup> took place in Westminster on Thursday night<sup>2</sup> & w<sup>h</sup> might have been attended with great loss of life, tho' mercifully no one was hurt.

<sup>1</sup> Secretary for India.<sup>2</sup> Explosion at the Local Government Board.



But it is a vy serious & alarming occurence following as it did close upon the threats of reprisals wh<sup>h</sup> the Queen long expected—but Mr. Gladstone did not. The language of Sheridan & O'Donovan Rossa are so bad that the Queen thinks something sh<sup>ld</sup> really be done about it. They openly avow satisfaction at the outrage & the latter speaks of it in triumph & says "*more & more* will follow." The Queen was glad to see how firmly Mr. Gladstone spoke on Wednesday.

959 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

March 17. 1883.

. . . Mr. Gladstone made no reference to the recent explosion in writing to Your Majesty, because his means of information were inferior to those of the Home Secretary<sup>1</sup> and any remark he could make would be simply that of an observer. Moreover, in that capacity, he feels it difficult to make any proper appreciation of the exact character of this wicked outrage. It does not appear to him, so far as he can at present judge, in any manner clear that this crime has been committed in view of, and in retaliation for, the Dublin detentions. It was on such retaliations alone that Mr. Gladstone humbly expressed to Your Majesty his rather diffident opinion that [the] crime not only was not directly aimed at life, but seems to have been committed with a view to the maximum of terror and of material destruction, in a portion of the building where there was no sign at the time of human habitation. Whether the existing danger to life be great or small, on which he will not attempt to dogmatise, the evidence in regard to it remains in his opinion much where it was a week ago. But quite apart from its relation to Irish outrages, and to the proceedings in Dublin, the matter is sufficiently grave and shocking. On this subject Mr. Gladstone humbly refers Your Majesty to his report of this day's Cabinet, from which Your Majesty will see that the views and feelings of the ministers are in unison with those which Your Majesty expresses.

960 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 418-19.)

DOWNING STREET. March 29. 1883.

Mr. Gladstone . . . presumes to lay before Your Majesty the expression of the sincere concern with which he has learned that

<sup>1</sup> Sir William Harcourt.

Your Majesty has been deprived by a sudden and fatal illness of the services of Mr. J. Brown

He is able in some degree to understand how the aid and attention of an attached, respected, and intelligent domestic, prolonged through so many years, and naturally productive of an ever-growing confidence, must when withdrawn thus abruptly leave a sense of serious loss, and this most of all, in Your Majesty's elevated sphere, and closely occupied life. Even in his own contracted circle of personal relations, he has had occasion to feel how much more of proximity may be the natural growth of such services, than the outer world would readily suppose.

Mr. Gladstone trusts Your Majesty may be able to select a good and efficient successor, though it would be too much to hope that anyone however capable can at once fill the void.

961

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. April 15 1883.

The Queen has to thank Mr. Gladstone for many very interesting reports—but she has been so shaken by the shock to her nerves of the loss of her dear, faithful and devoted attendant & friend & by the daily increasing missing of his presence—so necessary to her comfort—as well as by her continued inability to move—that she c<sup>d</sup> not write much sooner.

The Queen rejoiced at the rapidity with which the Law on Explosives was passed & at the great vigilance of the Police. But the worry w<sup>h</sup> this constant vigilance & watchfulness imposes on them & still more on the poor Soldiers who are comparatively few in number—is very distressing.—

There really ought to be some international agreement with other nations—for these Nihilists & assassins are one & the same every where & enemies to all civilization.—*All* are threatened alike, for they care not whom they injure.

962

*General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

OSBORNE. April 23. 1883.

I am commanded by The Queen to call your attention to a speech recently made by Mr. Chamberlain in which, Her Majesty is informed, the President of the Board of Trade tried to set class against class.

The Queen feels sure that you will agree with her in thinking such doctrines on the part of a Minister are much to be deplored, and Her Majesty hopes you will prevent any further speeches of this nature being made by members of the Government.

963 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to General Ponsonby*

24th April. 1883.

It will of course be my duty to communicate with Mr. Chamberlain on the subject of Her Majesty's view of his speech: but I think my communication with him would be much facilitated if I were able to say distinctly to what parts or passages of his speech I had occasion to call his attention.

964 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

*Private.*

OSBORNE. April 30. 1883.

In speaking of Windsor to The Queen I asked her if she had any special views. . . .

The person she thought of was Mr. Davidson. I remarked he was very young. Her Majesty admitted that, but denied it was an objection—It would be a great advantage to have a young man there—as his other qualities were all that could be desired.

I agreed that he was a most valuable man but one with small church experience. The Queen replied that he probably knew more about the Church of England than any one else.

965 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

*Private.*

OSBORNE. May 2. 1883.

. . . I may add, I touched on Dean Liddell's<sup>1</sup> name, but she said oh no he was quite out of the question and too old.

966 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. May 8. 1883.

The Queen is very anxious that the Deanery of Windsor should be offered to Mr. Randall Davidson as Her Majesty feels sure that there is no other clergyman better fitted for the combined appointment of Dean of Windsor and Resident Chaplain to The Queen.

Her Majesty commands me to add that she privately asked the

<sup>1</sup> Dean of Christ Church.

Archbishop of Canterbury whether Mr. Davidson's age would be an objection.

But His Grace does not think so and writes so warmly in favor of Mr. Davidson that Her Majesty hopes you will concur with her in making this choice.

967 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

May 10. 1883.

The Rev. R. T. Davidson is humbly recommended to Your Majesty by Mr. Gladstone for the Deanery of Windsor.

968 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

HOUSE OF COMMONS. May 24-5. 1883. 12 $\frac{1}{4}$  a m.

In proceeding to report on the course of business before the House of Commons today, Mr. Gladstone presumes to tender with his humble duty his warmest congratulations on the return of Your Majesty's birthday, and his hearty wish and prayer that Your Majesty may long live to witness an ever growing prosperity, happiness and loyalty of the nation. . . .

969

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

BALMORAL CASTLE. May 29th. 1883.

The Queen thanks Mr. Gladstone for his congratulations on her birthday as well as for his reports. . . .

The Queen can report vy little improvement in her walking powers.

970

*General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

BALMORAL. May 31. 1883.

The Queen commands me to remind you that she always objected to the Convention with the Boers of the Transvaal though of course sanctioned it on the advice of the Government.

Her Majesty thinks you will agree with her that the present state of affairs in South Africa is not pleasant—and she hopes we shall not now abandon our allies and our rights to satisfy the demands of a few agitators.

971 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to General Ponsonby*

1st June. 1883.

I have received your letter respecting the Convention with the Transvaal and will not fail to make it known to my colleagues.

I well remember the sentiments of the Queen on the Transvaal Convention ; but I think they had not reference to the Convention exclusively, but to the policy and proceedings out of which it grew.

I think also that in our view the Convention was not a measure embodying a sound and perfect system of relations but an expedient, the best which the difficult circumstances permitted, and which was necessarily to be tried by its working and results.

Therefore I am persuaded Her Majesty need not apprehend from us any advice such as would be prompted by variety of authorship, or any motive other than the desire to make the best of what we think a bad case.

972 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

HOUSE OF COMMONS. June 19-20. 1883.

. . . In closing this report, Mr. Gladstone presumes to offer his humble congratulations on the anniversary of Your Majesty's accession, and heartily prays that Your Majesty may be spared for a long series of such anniversaries.

973 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to General Ponsonby*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 430, and *Life of Gladstone*, III, 112)

*Private.*

22nd June. 1883.

*Re Chamberlain's Speech* ; I am sorry to say I had not read the report until I was warned by your letters to Granville and to Hamilton<sup>1</sup> ; for my sight does not now allow me to read largely the small type of newspapers. I have now read it, and I must at once say with deep regret. We had done our best to keep the Bright celebration<sup>2</sup> in harmony with the general tone of opinion by the mission which Granville kindly undertook.

I am the more sorry about this speech, because Chamberlain

<sup>1</sup> Private Secretary to Mr. Gladstone

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Bright's jubilee as Member for Birmingham.

has, this year in particular, shown both tact and talent in the management of questions not polemical such as the Bankruptcy Bill.

The speech is open to exception from three points of view, as I think: first in relation to Bright, secondly in relation to the Cabinet, thirdly, and most especially, in relation to the Crown, to which the speech did not indicate the consciousness of his holding any special relation. I am considering, and I have consulted with one or two of my colleagues, what best to do in the matter, either by and through Mr. Chamberlain himself, or otherwise.

### 974 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

(Partly printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 431.)

WINDSOR CASTLE. June 23. 1883.

The Queen thanks Mr. Gladstone for his regular reports from the House of Commons as well as for his congratulations on her Accession day.—

She cannot give a vy good report of herself—& she is much tired by the journey.—

But her leg is making progress—tho' it is slow.—

The Queen is glad to see that Mr. Gladstone & L<sup>d</sup> Granville both take a serious view of Mr. Chamberlain's Speech. A Cabinet Minister, or indeed any Minister, should not hold such dangerous & improper language. And the Queen must ask Mr. Gladstone to take some steps to mark her displeasure as well as that of the Govt. The Queen has from the vy first g<sup>ty</sup> deprecated Mr. Chamberlain's being in the Cabinet & she must say she thinks her fears have been fully realized.

### 975 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to General Ponsonby*

(Partly printed in *Life of Gladstone*, III, 112-13.)

\* 26th June. 1883.

It appeared to me in considering the case of Mr. Chamberlain's speech that by far the best correction would be found, if a natural opportunity should offer, in a speech differently coloured from himself. I found also that he was engaged to preside on Saturday next at the dinner of the Cobden Club. I addressed myself therefore to this point, and Mr. Chamberlain will revert, on that

occasion, to the same line of thought. On seeing the report I shall be in a condition to form my opinion how far the object in view has been attained.

976 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

HOUSE OF COMMONS. *June 26, 1883.*

. . . There is no factious opposition at present, but the points touched by the Bill are numerous, and the subject is one which favours the display of that talkativeness, apart from faction, and from obstruction, which has so largely made its way into the habit of modern Parliamentary life, and which detracts so seriously from the reputation of the House of Commons as an assembly made up of men of business. . . .

977 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to General Ponsonby*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 433)

30th *June, 1883.*

From Granville's report of a conversation with Her Majesty yesterday, I am not sure whether I have made clear the course I have thought it best to take with respect to Mr. Chamberlain. I have done what I could, in the way which seemed most promising, to influence his mind, and allow him with grace to set the matter right at his Cobden Club dinner today. Of course I hope this may be effectual, for the mildest medicine, if it will do its work, is the best. Should my hope be disappointed, it will then remain to consider what farther step may be taken. But like Granville I consider that the offence does not consist in holding certain opinions, of which in my judgment the political force and effect are greatly exaggerated; but in the attitude assumed, and the tone and colour given to the speech.

If you are able to dine here on Tuesday I will explain more at large.

978 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

*Private.*

WINDSOR CASTLE. *July 1. 1883.*

The Queen has been reading Mr. Chamberlain's Cobden Club Speech.

I hardly know how to understand it.

Her Majesty observed that freedom of speech was invaluable

to independent persons but when any one joined with others in any undertaking they were bound to their colleagues and to those they served in all their public acts.

The Queen expects to hear from you on the subject.

I am delighted to have the honor of dining with you on Tuesday next.

979 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 436.)

HOUSE OF COMMONS. *July 3 1883.*

Mr. Gladstone . . . humbly recalls Your Majesty's attention to his previous communications on the subject of Mr. Chamberlain's Speech at Birmingham, and of his effort to obtain the adoption of a different tone in the Speech made on Saturday at the Cobden Club.

After perusing that Speech, and observing the reception it met with in various quarters, Mr. Gladstone addressed a letter to Mr. Chamberlain, and received a reply, which he thinks does as much as can be done under the circumstances to repair an error of those letters, which he hopes may be considered as in some degree making provision for the future. Mr. Gladstone incloses copies<sup>1</sup>: being desirous that in the case of Mr. Chamberlain, as in that of Sir Charles Dilke, Your Majesty should be possessed with the greatest exactness of all means of judgment. Both have shown, in various ways, undoubted power to serve the public, and their time of life together with their capacity and the positions they have severally attained enhance the importance of any question relating to their political demeanour.

980 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. *July 5. 1883.*

. . . I think Her Majesty was satisfied with the result of the correspondence with Mr. Chamberlain. .

981 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

OSBORNE. *August 2. 1883.*

The Queen commands me to send you an extract from a letter she has received from a person who is correctly informed.

<sup>1</sup> Printed in J. L. Garvin's *Life of Joseph Chamberlain*, I, 397-8.



Her Majesty agrees with the writer in thinking we should make Bulgaria the Barrier against Russian advances on Constantinople.

I have sent a copy of this letter to Lord Granville.

982 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to General Ponsonby*

3rd August. 1883.

In the main proposition of the very interesting extract which you have sent me by Her Majesty's desire I heartily concur. Indeed all I have said and done in regard both to Roumania and to the Balkan peninsula for nearly 30 years has, in intention at least, been founded upon my conviction that there is one and one only legitimate and effectual barrier to the progress of Russia southwards to Constantinople, namely the strength, freedom and contentment which good government will give to the people of the various provinces. On this subject I take leave to enclose a short extract from a speech made by me in 1858 on the Union of the Danubian Principalities. The words are just as applicable to Bulgaria, and the principle is one of vital consequence. Nay Musurus<sup>1</sup> always declared himself highly satisfied with the opinion I have constantly stated to him that whatever is given by the Sultan should be given not to this or that great Power but to the people themselves of the Provinces. In these views I am certain that Granville agrees; and the principle on which we rest is one of wide scope and vital importance. . . .

As to German influence, I should indeed be too glad to see the smallest good deed done by the Sultan as its result. Till there is some such sign, I fear I shall continue rather sceptical about it; but I regard it with no jealousy whatever.

983 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

- 10, DOWNING STREET. August 9. 1883.

. . . The Cabinet think that the second recommendation of the Committee appointed to consider the case of the Duke of Wellington's statue may properly be adopted. It is that the statue be melted down, and a smaller work of due size placed on a pedestal in front of Apsley House. . . .

| <sup>1</sup> Turkish Ambassador in London.

984 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*10, DOWNING STREET. *August 10. 1883.*

. . . Your Majesty was pleased to make an inquiry from Mr. Gladstone respecting St. Francis de Sales. If it is Your Majesty's pleasure he will take the earliest opportunity of tracing out the rather curious articles of a magazine of which he made mention, or will make any other inquiry respecting Biographies of this remarkable person who has the [*blank in copy*] of singular charm as well as of deep devotion, but who may be found to belong to the more modern, and less healthy and manly type of santship.

985 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*OSBORNE. *August 11. 1883.*

The Queen cannot conceal her disappointment at the decision arrived at by the Cabinet to offer the execution of the Wellington Statue to public competition.

Her Majesty is unable to approve of this step which is an unfortunate one.

It is very doubtful if any of the principal sculptors will enter into competition. And the result will consequently be a failure.

It would be better in The Queen's opinion to retain the present Statue than to replace it by an inferior work.

986 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*OSBORNE. *August 16. 1883.*

. . . 2. The Queen is most anxious that Boehm should execute the new Statue of the Duke of Wellington. If he does not, The Queen hopes the old Statue may remain.

3. The Queen is much obliged to you for the trouble you have taken in providing her—and indeed a large number of readers—with a history of the Anti-Semitic trial which she is looking forward to read. . . .

987 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*10, DOWNING STREET. *Aug. 21. 1883.*

. . . The opinions of Your Majesty against open competition for a new Wellington Statue, and Your Majesty's preference for

the retention of the old statue rather than resort to such a mode of proceeding, were made known to the Cabinet. The Cabinet had to take into view the fact that an announcement with respect to competition for the new Statue had already been made in Parliament. This being so, it was thought that the matter had better be held over for further consideration, and the old statue would in the meantime of course remain.

988 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Partly printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 440-1, and *Life of Gladstone*, III, 115)

ON THE NORTH SEA. *Sept.* 15. 1883.

Mr. Gladstone . . . has to offer his humble apology for not having sought from Your Majesty the usual gracious permission before setting foot on a foreign shore. He embarked on the 8th in a steamer of the Castle's Company under the auspices of Sir Donald Currie, with no more ambitious expectation than that of a cruise among the Western Isles. But the extraordinary solidity, so to call it, of a very fine ship (the *Pembroke Castle*, 4000 tons, 410 feet long) on the water, rendering her in no small degree independent of weather, encouraged his fellow-voyagers, and even himself though a most indifferent sailor, to extend their views, and the vessel is now on the North Sea running over to Christiansand in Norway, from whence it is proposed to go to Copenhagen, with the expectation however of again touching British soil in the middle of next week. Mr. Gladstone humbly trusts that, under these circumstances, his omission may be excused.

Mr. Tennyson who is one of the party, is an excellent sailor and seems to enjoy himself much in the floating castle as it may be termed in a wider sense than that of its appellation on the register.

The weather has been variable with a heavy roll from the Atlantic at the points not sheltered ; but the stormy North Sea has on the whole behaved extremely well as regards its two besetting liabilities to storm and fog.

Mr. Gladstone trusts that Your Majesty has now completely recovered from the tedious consequences of Your Majesty's accident, and that the weather at Balmoral has been favourable to the enjoyment of its bracing air.

989

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 441-2.)BALMORAL CASTLE. *Sept* 20. 1883.

The Queen rec<sup>d</sup> Mr. Gladstone's letter posted at Copenhagen yesterday.

She gives him full credit for not having reflected at the time when he decided to extend his cruise to Norway & Denmark, that he ought not to do so without communicating first with the Queen.—

The Queen cannot deny that she *was very much* surprised, to say the least, at his Visit to the latter Country, especially at this moment—when the Emperor of Russia & King of Greece are staying there,—& there are so many topics which cannot be discussed with Foreign Sovereigns by the Prime Minister without due consultation with the Foreign Sec<sup>y</sup> & the sanction of the Sovereign —

The Queen fully believes that Mr. Gladstone will have avoided Politics with the Sovereigns he met at Copenhagen ;—But she doubts the public believing this, & many remarks & surmises have already been made & hazarded which may prove inconvenient.

The Prime Minister of Great Britain cannot move about (especially when every step he takes is reported—she knows not by whom or whether a Reporter was on board with him ?) as a private individual & any Trip like the one he has just taken will lead, as she has above observed, to Political speculations w<sup>h</sup> it is better to avoid.

990 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*(Partly printed in *Life of Gladstone*, III, 116-17.)SHIP *Pembroke Castle*. MOUTH OF THE THAMES *Sept*. 20. 1883.

Mr. Gladstone with his humble duty reports to Your Majesty his return this evening from Copenhagen to London. The passage was very rapid, and the weather favourable.

He had the honour, with his wife and daughter and other companions of his voyage, to receive an invitation to dine at Fredensdorf on Monday. He found there the entire circle of illustrious Personages, who have been gathered for some time in a family

party, with a very few exceptions. The singularly domestic character of this remarkable assemblage, and the affectionate intimacy which appeared to pervade it, made an impression upon him not less deep than the demeanour of all its members, which was so kindly and so simple, that even the word condescending could hardly be applied to it. Nor must Mr. Gladstone allow himself to omit another striking feature of the remarkable picture, in the unrestrained and unbounded happiness of the Royal children, nineteen in number, who appeared like a single family, reared under a single roof.

It having been conveyed to Mr. Gladstone that there was a willingness on the part of some of the illustrious Personages to visit the *Pembroke Castle* on the ensuing morning, he named it to his friend Sir D. Currie who at once availed himself of the proffered honour.

On Tuesday between 10 and 11, Prince Albert of Wales reached Copenhagen; and at 12 a series of boats left the quay, conveying the whole of the Imperial and Royal party, with the exception only of the Duchess of Cumberland, who was not perfectly well, and of a few of the youngest Princes and Princesses. A few minutes were sufficient to convey them, amid the cheers of the people, and attended by their suites, and by the Danish Ministers, on board the *Pembroke Castle*. The Emperor was particularly minute and intelligent in his examination of the ship.

Over 60 persons, of whom the guests were between 40 and 45, had to be accommodated in the Cabin constructed for only 54, but nothing occurred to mar the best entertainment which the ship of Sir D. Currie could supply, and the members of the Royal party, senior and junior, appeared heartily to enjoy themselves.

The Emperor of Russia proposed the health of Your Majesty. Mr. Gladstone by arrangement with Your Majesty's Minister at this Court, Mr. Vivian, proposed the healths of the King and Queen of Denmark, the Emperor and Empress of Russia, and the King and Queen of the Hellenes.

The King of Denmark did Mr. Gladstone the honour to propose his health; and Mr. Gladstone, in acknowledging this toast, thought he could not do otherwise, though no speeches had been made, than express the friendly feeling of Great Britain towards Denmark, and the satisfaction with which the British people

recognised the title of race which unites them with the inhabitants of the Scandinavian countries. Perhaps the most vigorous and remarkable portion of the British nation had, Mr. Gladstone said, been drawn from these countries.

After the luncheon, the senior Imperial and Royal Personages crowded together into a small cabin on the Deck to hear Mr. Tennyson read two of his Poems<sup>1</sup>: several of the younger branches clustering round the doors.

Between 2 and 3, the Illustrious Party left the *Pembroke Castle*, and in the midst of an animated scene, went on board the King of Denmark's Yacht, which steamed towards Elsinore.

Mr. Gladstone was much pleased to observe that the Emperor of Russia appeared to be entirely released from the immediate pressure of his anxieties supposed to weigh much upon his mind.

The Empress of Russia has the genial and gracious manners which on this and on every occasion, mark H.R.H. the Princess of Wales. Mr. Gladstone remembers, as he is writing, that Your Majesty has had the opportunity of appreciating the demeanour of the Empress; yet he cannot regret having made the observation.

### 991 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

SHIP *Pembroke Castle*. Sept. 20. 1883.

Your Majesty is humbly advised by Mr. Gladstone to permit the offer of a Barony to Mr. Tennyson.

Your Majesty will appreciate, in a manner to which Mr. Gladstone can add nothing, the general grounds on which Mr. Gladstone presumes to recommend the creation of a literary Peerage.

Mr. Gladstone takes occasion humbly to remind Your Majesty that about thirteen or fourteen years ago Your Majesty was pleased to sanction the offer of a Peerage to Mr. Grote<sup>2</sup>: whose Parliamentary career had been so remote and so brief, that this, Mr. Gladstone conceives, may be viewed as a literary Peerage intended though not conferred.

The distinction of Mr. Tennyson seems to be higher and perhaps much higher, even than that of Mr. Grote.

Further, Your Majesty will remember having at a period

<sup>1</sup> *The Bugle Song* and *The Grandmother*.

<sup>2</sup> Author of *The History of Greece*.

slightly more recent, allowed the offer of a Baronetcy to Mr. Tennyson, on the recommendation of Mr. Gladstone.<sup>1</sup>

That recommendation never appeared to Mr. Gladstone to correspond with the full measure of Mr. Tennyson's claims, but it had reference to his supposed means, to his understood wish and to the fact that it was to be reserved until his death, and then, subject to the conditions of the usual and constitutional process, to be conferred on his eldest son.

Mr. Gladstone has reason to believe that Mr. Tennyson's fortune has since that time improved, and he is under the impression that the proposal he now makes would probably be more acceptable to Mr. Tennyson than the previous suggestion: of which Mr. Gladstone will add, he was not the original author.<sup>2</sup>

Mr. Gladstone bears in mind the fact that the illustrious and immortal name of Scott was only adorned with a Baronetcy—but the times and also the pecuniary circumstances of Mr. Tennyson are more favourable to his assumption of the higher dignity.

It is Mr. Gladstone's hope that Your Majesty may consider the addition of so bright and great a name to the Roll of the House of Peers, as a legitimate mode of adding new strength to that important Assembly.

### 992 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 442-3.)

Sept. 22. 1883.

Mr. Gladstone . . . has to acknowledge Your Majesty's letter of the 20th giving him full credit for not having reflected at the time when he decided, as Your Majesty believes, to extend his recent cruise to Norway and Denmark.

He may humbly state that he had no desire or idea beyond a glance, if only for a few hours, at a little of the fine and peculiar scenery of Norway. But he is also responsible for having acquiesced in the proposal (which originated with Mr. Tennyson) to spend a day at Copenhagen, where he happens to have some associations of literary interest; for having accepted an unexpected invitation to dine with the King, some thirty miles off; and for having promoted the execution of a wish, again unexpectedly com-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. 614. ~~71~~

<sup>2</sup> The proposal was made by Disraeli.

municated to him, that a visit of the Illustrious party to the *Pembroke Castle* should be arranged. Mr. Gladstone ought probably to have foreseen all these things. Increasing weariness of mind, under public cares for which he feels himself less and less fitted, may have blunted the faculty of anticipation, with which he was never very largely endowed.

With respect to the construction put upon his act abroad, Mr. Gladstone ought again, perhaps, to have foreseen that, in countries habituated to more important personal meetings, which are uniformly declared to be held in the interests of general peace, his momentary and unpremeditated contact with the Sovereigns at Fredensdorf would be denounced, or suspected of a mischievous design. He has, however, some consolation in finding that, in England at least, such a suspicion appears to have been confined to two secondary Journals, neither of which has ever found (so far as he is aware) in any act of his anything but guilt and folly.

Thus adopting, to a great extent, Your Majesty's view, Mr. Gladstone can confirm Your Majesty's belief that (with the exception of a sentence addressed by him to the King of the Hellenes singly respecting Bulgaria), there was on all hands an absolute silence in regard to public affairs. He repeats his regret for having found himself at Kirkwall in a position in which, anxious not to disappoint a party of friends, he had to assume beforehand Your Majesty's gracious permission, and he assures Your Majesty that nothing but necessity will hereafter induce him, in his present charge, to raise any question of quitting for ever so short a time Your Majesty's dominions.

993

### *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

(Partly printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 443-4.)

BALMORAL CASTLE. *Sept.* 23. 1883.

The Queen has to thank Mr. Gladstone for two letters, the one from the Nore dated on Friday & the other of yesterday's date.

His interesting account of the Royal Danish family &c only confirms what she has always heard to be the case from all those who have been there. But so many have rarely been assembled at the same time. The King & Queen of Denmark are singularly fortunate in their Children. . . . & if Thrones are happiness—w<sup>h</sup>



in *our* times they certainly do not constitute—she certainly has a large share of it.

The Queen hopes that the Emperor of Russia's name has been used in vain in Bulgaria—Still he sh<sup>ld</sup> not allow his Civil & Military Agents to behave in the disgraceful way they have done in that Country lately.

The Queen quite understands how Mr. Gladstone was led on to visit Copenhagen & how the Poet Laureate wished to visit that Country.

She will gladly sanction a Barony being conferred on him,—but thinks it w<sup>ld</sup> be well to delay it till the beginning of next year.—

It was L<sup>d</sup> Beaconsfield who first proposed him for a Baronetcy w<sup>h</sup> he then did not wish for. . . .

#### 994 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

HAWARDEN. *Sept. 27. 1883.*

Mr. Gladstone is grateful for Your Majesty's gracious letter of the 25th and presents his humble duty.

He would ask Your Majesty's permission to direct proceedings to be taken in the matter of Mr. Tennyson's Peerage immediately after Christmas, as his assumption of a title would appear to be an event appropriate to that season of the year.

As the case is peculiar, he will unless Your Majesty disapproves it encourage Mr. Tennyson to convey his thanks directly to Your Majesty for the gracious act ; in reply to an inquiry which he expects that Mr. Tennyson will make on this point. . . .

#### 995 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

BALMORAL CASTLE. *Oct. 1. 1883.*

. . . The Queen does also not object to the Barony being conferred on Mr. Tennyson at Christmas, tho' she does *not* see why *that* sh<sup>ld</sup> be a particularly appropriate time for its being given.—The Queen is sure Mr. Gladstone must be greatly shocked at the insults offered to the King of Spain at Paris !—

The Republic is fast coming to an end she thinks & hopes, for their unscrupulous & reckless Govt. is doing immense harm to the Country. But she fears we shall see it pass thro' a *phase* of Red Republicanism before it returns to a Monarchical form.

996 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

Oct. 10. 1883.

As Mr. Gladstone gathered from words of Your Majesty some time back that Your Majesty's mind was not altogether satisfied concerning what is termed the Ilbert Bill,<sup>1</sup> he presumes, with his humble duty, to submit a speech delivered by Lord Hartington, in which he deals succinctly, but clearly, and forcibly, with the matter. Mr. Gladstone is not acquainted with any serious handling of the argument on the other side.

997 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

BALMORAL. October 20. 1883.

The Queen has read the copy of Lord Hartington's speech on the "Ilbert Bill" which you sent her.

Her Majesty observes that the excitement against this measure has not abated and that even Lord Ripon<sup>2</sup> and Lord Northbrook<sup>3</sup> are alarmed at the agitation on the question.

998 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 449-50.)

[Telegram]

BALMORAL. 27 October. 1883.

I approve of the withdrawal of the troops from Cairo and of the reduction to 3000 if really sufficient on the condition they remain indefinitely in Egypt and no promise of definite withdrawal or further reduction be made in Parliament. Think reparation for the insult not sufficient.<sup>4</sup>

999 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 451.)

BALMORAL CASTLE. Oct. 30 1883.

. . . With respect to Egypt she believes Sir Evelyn Wood & others who understand the question consider that the "undefined" period of the Troops remaining there for the benefit of Egypt, as well as well as for our interests—will probably be *many years*.—

<sup>1</sup> Submitting Europeans to trial by Indian magistrates for certain offences.<sup>2</sup> Governor-General of India.<sup>3</sup> Secretary for India.<sup>4</sup> Cf 999.

As regards Madagascar, & the insufficiency of the reparation,<sup>1</sup> the Queen has telegraphed what she meant.—What she fears is, a growing tendency to swallow insults & affronts & of not taking them up in that high tone wh they used formerly to be, & wh is so much the case in private transactions nowadays.

Insults to the honour of men & women—slander & defamation of character, since duelling (a thing in itself not to be defended but wh still kept up a high tone)—has ceased—are not resented or put down as [a] proper sense of chivalry [and] honour wld demand them to be —

This is an increasing evil, wh shld be carefully watched.

1000

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 451-2 )

BALMORAL CASTLE. 30 Oct. 1883.

The Queen has been much distressed by all she has heard & read lately of the deplorable condition of the Homes of the Poor in our great Towns.—

She is well aware that this is a subject wh has for a long time attracted public attention & that acts of Parliament have been passed & noble Philanthropic exertions have been made to improve the wretched tenements & still more wretched occupants.—

Notwithstanding the painfully distressing statements that have been published of this ever increasing misery—these laws & good work have not been without some happy results & the Queen is therefore encouraged to hope that further steps in the proper direction will in course of time mitigate this great & growing evil wh threatens the prosperity of the Country.

The Queen will be glad to hear Mr. Gladstone's opinion on this question & to learn whether the Government contemplate the introduction of any measures or propose to take any steps to obtain more precise information as to the *true* state of affairs in these overcrowded, unhealthy & squalid abodes. She cannot but think that there are questions of less importance than this—wh are under discussion & wh might wait till *one* involving the

<sup>1</sup> A British missionary named Shaw had been arrested in April, 1883 by the French authorities, who now expressed their regret and paid a sum of £1,000 as compensation.

very existence of thousands, nay millions—had been fully considered by the Government.

1001 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

HAWARDEN. *October 31. 1883.*

Your Majesty may remember having graciously encouraged Mr. Gladstone at Osborne, last summer, to procure the insertion in the periodical called the *Nineteenth Century* of some comprehensive and carefully written account of the strange proceedings which had recently taken place in Hungary and elsewhere against the Jews.

Mr. Knowles, the Editor of that Review, readily and thankfully accepted Your Majesty's suggestion, and he has forwarded to Mr. Gladstone a copy of the November number which contains, he says, an ably written article on the sad subject. The author is Dr. Wright, an Irish clergyman, known for his talents, and for his acquirements as a Hebraist. At the request of Mr. Knowles, Mr. Gladstone herewith transmits the number and lays his humble duty before Your Majesty.

1002 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[*Nov. 3. 1883.*]

. . . Have read the article. He tells the story plainly without any dressing up, which I like. The second part dealing with the superstitions against the Jews is very curious and shows up some German Professors very well.

1003 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Partly printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 452-3)

HAWARDEN. *Nov. 3. 1883.*

. . . Your Majesty's observations on Social courtesy as affected by the abolition of duelling open a field of wide interests on which he can hardly trust himself to enter, so difficult does he find it, amidst the manifold variations of the phenomena of life, to trace effects to their causes with any degree of precision. The suddenness, with which duelling disappeared, was remarkable, and more probably than the coarser natures could bear, so that the bad results on which Your Majesty comments so justly were to be expected. On the whole and within the narrow circle of his

own experience Mr. Gladstone clings to the belief that a great balance of good has been obtained from the change.

Mr. Gladstone fully appreciates the importance of Your Majesty's remarks concerning the dwellings of the people : and it is a cause of satisfaction that there is now less cause than ever to apprehend that the interests connected with these subjects can be put in jeopardy by the conflicts of parties. Mr. Gladstone believes that his own colleagues are fully impressed with the necessity of using, or encouraging the use of, public powers, for preventing the existence of dwellings unfit for human habitation, and also, within the limits of their legitimate province, for promoting the improvement of what may be termed the homes of labour. No better example, so far as he knows, has up to this time been set, than that which was set by the Municipality of Glasgow some years back upon the occasion when Glasgow College was removed to its present imposing site, and when the neighbouring quarter of this City was reconstructed.

Mr. Gladstone will not fail to communicate with Sir Charles Dilke, as the head of the Local Government Board, on the subject of Your Majesty's letter. He himself does not doubt that improvements in Local Government, which he trusts are near at hand, will lead to a sensible progress in this great subject.

Mr. Gladstone was sure Your Majesty would be much shocked at the two explosions in London. It is difficult to understand how even the lowest wretches of mankind should set [*blank in copy*] which is at once so brutal, so irrational, so cowardly, and even so contemptible. Sir W. Harcourt<sup>1</sup> is, as Your Majesty is aware, fully alive to his duties in the matter : and it is difficult to suppose, where the heart and mind of the people are so sound, that these outrages can be multiplied without detection, or that detection, once attained, will not tell powerfully against repetition.

1004 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to General Ponsonby*

HAWARDEN. 4th Nov. 1883.

. . . The Queen's doubt certainly seems to me judicious. The celebration of a Luther Festival seems perfectly natural in Germany, where he is a great national hero and not merely a

<sup>1</sup> Home Secretary.

theological or ecclesiastical combatant. There he has acted powerfully upon, and given much of its tone to, the whole thought of the country. But, as I think, to make the celebration here is above all things to stir up the embers of religious controversy, and the religious controversies of one age are never wholly satisfactory to the mind of another. In Germany the name of Luther is associated with the widening of thought—here the attempt rather is to tie it down to a particular form and thus to narrow it. Agreeably to this I see in the printed list the names of the most vehement anti-Maynooth men. . . .

1005 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to General Ponsonby*

12th November. 1883.

With relation to the interesting matter of the Luther commemoration, pray read the article in the *Standard* of to-day. It may not be perfect, but it is far above the usual newspaper level, and is written in a large and historic spirit.

I feel myself to owe a deep debt of gratitude to Queen Elizabeth in connection with British religion and history. But I should think twice before recommending a Centenary for her (were it the time) on the ground that live controversies are bad enough without rekindling dead ones.

I think Her Majesty may like to see the enclosed Memoranda from some Ministers to whom I made known Her Majesty's letter on Housing.

The great case is London ; and the great want, as I believe, is the want of a motive power, much more vigorous, authoritative and raised above private interests, than the Parish Vestries.

1006 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 454-5.)

22 Nov. 1883.

. . . The Cabinet also agreed with Lord Granville in the opinion that, after the heavy disaster which has now befallen Egypt in the Soudan,<sup>1</sup> it would be well for Sir E. Baring<sup>2</sup> to invite the attention of the Egyptian Government without waiting for an invitation or inquiry, to the policy of endeavouring to effect an honourable withdrawal from its territorial engagements in that region. . . .

<sup>1</sup> The annihilation of Hicks Pasha's army at El Obeid, November 3, 1883.

<sup>2</sup> Agent and Consul-General in Egypt

1007 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. Nov. 25. 1883.

The Queen sends Mr. Gladstone the Lines.—&amp; Byron's.

## ENCLOSURE

Friend more than Servant, loyal, truthful, brave  
 Self less than duty even to the grave.

---

*Engraved under the Statue of Mr. J. Brown.*

---

It is *more* & not "less"—for *he* was FAR MORE "*friend*"  
 than "*Servant*."

The other Lines by Byron w<sup>h</sup> Tennyson sent & w<sup>h</sup> are still  
 more applicable to her dear Brown's *character* are :

"A truer, nobler trustier heart  
 "More loving & more loyal never beat  
 "Within a human breast."

What Poem can this be taken from ?

Nov. 25. 1883.

V. R. I.

1008 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. Nov. 25. 1883.

As Mr. Gladstone can read German & as he is interested in records of former days—the Queen sends him some vy curious letters written by her dear Grandmother—the late D<sup>cess</sup> Augusta of Saxe-Coburg Saalfeld—to a Sister of hers, describing her views on England & the King of the Belgians (then P<sup>ce</sup> Leopold) & to the D<sup>cess</sup> of Kent "*Victoire*."—

The Queen is described as a little girl.

The acc<sup>t</sup> of Claremont is vy exact—& that of London is vy curious. It was written in 1825—& if the D<sup>cess</sup> was surprised at the size of London—THEN what w<sup>ld</sup> she say *now*?—The Queen has purposely marked those describing England—They have been collected & *privately* printed.

The Queen w<sup>ld</sup> be glad to have it back when done with.

Her Grandmother was a vy remarkable woman—with a commanding character & g<sup>t</sup> strength of mind.

1009 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

30th Nov. 1883.

Mr. Gladstone returns to Your Majesty, with his best thanks and humble duty, the letters of the Duchess of Saxe-Coburg, with which Your Majesty graciously intrusted him for perusal.

He finds in them everywhere the signs both of a kindly and of an intelligent and observant mind, but the flower and crown of the collection is without doubt as he thinks to be found in the highly interesting account given at p. 45 of Your Majesty in childhood.

1010 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

WINDSOR CASTLE. 1 December. 1883.

How is Mrs. Gladstone?

1011 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

10, DOWNING STREET. WHITEHALL. 3 December. 1883.

Mr. Gladstone takes the liberty of humbly apprising Your Majesty that the passage from Byron, about which Your Majesty was pleased to make an inquiry, is to be found in the *Two Foscari*, Act II, Scene I, so he learns from Mr. Tennyson. . . .

Mrs. Gladstone for whom Your Majesty has graciously inquired has made an excellent recovery, and they think of going to Hawarden tomorrow,

1012 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

OSBORNE. December 22. 1883.

The Queen is much distressed by the complaints and unpleasant remarks that reach Her Majesty respecting the Wellington Statue at Hyde Park Corner and commands me to ask you if the time has not come for a decision upon this monument. It seems to be improbable that funds will be forthcoming for reproducing a finer work of Art and Her Majesty therefore hopes that the present statue may be placed on a high pedestal on the spot it now occupies.

1013 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

OSBORNE. Christmas Day. 1883.

The Queen has not yet thanked Mr. Gladstone for his last letters & for having ascertained where the fine quotation from Byron was to be found.—



What Title will Mr. Tennyson take ?<sup>1</sup> The Queen wishes Mr. & Mrs. Gladstone a happy Christmas & New Year.

The last has been one of suffering, sorrow & trial to herself—& the New one is full of anxiety to all.

Egypt, South Africa, Ireland & the various measures wh<sup>h</sup> are under consideration are all matters calculated to give cause for deep thought & anxious deliberation.

#### 1014 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

HAWARDEN. 27th December. 1883.

. . . In looking forward to a coming year, Mr. Gladstone fears that Your Majesty's high position as the Sovereign of a great and ever rising Empire, cannot be otherwise than one of severe if not of growing anxiety ; which waits upon all that is truly elevated in this world as well as upon much that is not. He laments that Ireland adds, and may continue to add, to Your Majesty's cares, but he is ever more and more firm in the conviction that follies, or even crimes across St. George's Channel, though they may cause grave domestic inconveniences, can never while righteous policy is observed impare the influence, or frustrate the action, or endanger the security of the Empire.

#### 1015 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

10, DOWNING STREET. Jan. 3. 1884.

. . . In respect to Egypt, their discussions naturally followed the order indicated by the contents of Sir E. Baring's telegram No. 9. From this telegram it appears that the Egyptian Government is not only aware of its own incapacity to hold the vast territory known as the Soudan, but is prepared to announce it by applying to the Sultan to undertake the responsibility of reconquering it, and by surrendering all title to it into his hands. That Government looks to the retention of Khartoum, but the Cabinet found that Sir E. Baring, together with all the authorities, believe that it has no force with which to hold Khartoum. The Cabinet thought it would not be right to impede Cherif Pacha's applications to the Sultan, and indeed was well pleased

<sup>1</sup> On being advised that the title would be Baron Tennyson of Aldworth, in the County of Sussex, and of Prior's Manor of Freshwater, in the Isle of Wight, Her Majesty replied : " The Queen is glad he keeps his own name."

at the idea of the occupation of posts on the Red Sea by the Turks (as occupation by the Mahdi would greatly facilitate the Slave Trade) but desired to warn the Egyptian Government against entering into pecuniary engagements, which it cannot afford to defray, and also considered that those in command at Khartoum should have full authority to withdraw from it in case of need the garrison and those of the inhabitants who might be exposed to danger in the event of a rising or an attack. . . .

1016 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

OSBORNE. *January 21 1884.*

The Queen means to go, if she is able, about the 7th of April to Darmstadt for the marriage of her granddaughter which Her Majesty feels is a duty as the Princess has no mother and The Queen has always been almost like a mother to those dear Grandchildren. Her Majesty will only be away about a fortnight and she has made it a condition to appear at nothing but the wedding.

1017 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

10, DOWNING STREET 22 Jan 1884.

Mr. Gladstone reports to Your Majesty with his humble duty that the Cabinet re-assembled to-day, and in the first place applied itself to the consideration of several matters connected with Egypt. . . .

Lord Granville stated to the Cabinet what had occurred with reference to the mission of General Gordon.<sup>1</sup> He also read communications from the General, in which he proposes to become the officer and representative of the Khedive for the evacuation of the Soudan, by which is understood the inland territory. It is proposed to send these communications to Sir E. Baring,<sup>2</sup> and to authorise him to arrange the precise terms and put into force the instruments which General Gordon has drawn. . . .

The plan of H.R.H. The Prince of Wales with regard to the statue of the Duke of Wellington was referred to and explained, and Lord Hartington undertook to obtain official information as to that portion of it which concerns the removal of the present statue from London to Aldershot. . . .

<sup>1</sup> General Gordon left London, January 18, 1884

<sup>2</sup> Agent and Consul-General in Egypt.

1018

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

OSBORNE. Feb. 2. 1884.

The Queen sends her book <sup>1</sup> for Mr. Gladstone to glance at—that he may see how very unlike *Truth's* description it is. But w<sup>ld</sup> ask to have it back before he goes away—as *no* one sh<sup>ld</sup> see it before it is published on the 12th inst :—

She will offer him a Copy at once—afterwards.

1019 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

OSBORNE. Feb. 2. 1884.

Mr. Gladstone presents his humble duty, and gratefully returns the Volume, with the sight of which Your Majesty has favoured him.

A glance at its pages suffices utterly to impute the absurd and most wanton statement, published in one of the notorious newspapers which disgrace the period, with reference to the nature of its contents.

But Mr. Gladstone has been able to peruse a considerable portion of it, and everywhere to recognise the reappearance of all the qualities, which rendered the former *Leaves* so attractive to Your Majesty's subjects, and so conducive to their appreciation of Your Majesty's character.

1020 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

10, DOWNING STREET. 8 February. 1884.

Mr. Gladstone . . . reports that the Cabinet met to-day, when Lord Hartington<sup>2</sup> laid before them a letter from Lord Wolseley, proposing that their policy as to the Soudan should be reconsidered, and that a force of four battalions of infantry, together with other arms, should be sent to Suakim with a view to the infliction of a severe chastisement upon the Arab forces in the portion of the Soudan adjoining that place.

The Cabinet saw many objections to this plan.

Lord Granville<sup>3</sup> laid before the Cabinet a telegram which he had yesterday addressed to Sir E. Baring.<sup>4</sup> In this telegram he

<sup>1</sup> *More Leaves from the Journal of a Life in the Highlands.*

<sup>2</sup> Secretary for War.

<sup>3</sup> Foreign Secretary.

<sup>4</sup> Agent and Consul-General in Egypt.

asked whether General Gordon in the altered circumstances (since Baker's defeat <sup>1</sup>) persevered in his intention of proceeding to Khartoum, and also whether he had suggestions to offer.

The Cabinet thought it would be well to close this telegram by Sir E. Baring's explaining to General Gordon, that the request for suggestions did not relate exclusively to his journey to Khartoum but would embrace the statement of any alternative conducive to the purpose in view.

1021

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 477.)

OSBORNE. February 9. 1884.

The Queen has to thank Mr. Gladstone for several letters. She feels very strongly about the Soudan, & Egypt.

And she must say she thinks a blow *must* be struck, or we shall *never* be able to convince the Mahomedans that they have not beaten us.—These are wild Arabs & they w<sup>ld</sup> not stand ag<sup>st</sup> *regular* good Troops at all. The Queen *thinks* Lord Wolseley's plan *will* be considered—& our *whole position remembered*. It is true that the Troops who were defeated & were so cowardly were Egyptians, but they were *commanded* by an *Englishman*, & the fact of this following upon Hicks' destruction *must* lower us in the eyes of all the World, & most particularly of India.—We have taken a gt deal of responsibility upon us in Egypt—but not enough to make us able to act as we ought. We are hampered by the Egyptians. Nubar Pasha <sup>a</sup> is said to be vy nervous. We *shall* have to take some strong measures & let us not wait till it is too late!—

We must make a demonstration of strength & show & determination & we must not let this fine & fruitful Country with its peaceable Inhabitants be left a prey to murder & rapine & utter confusion. It w<sup>ld</sup> be a disgrace to the British name & the Country will not stand.

The Queen trembles for General Gordon's safety. If any thing befalls *him* the result will be awful.

1022 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

Feb. 11. 1884.

Mr. Gladstone . . . reports that the Cabinet met to-day for some points of Parliamentary business, with which he

<sup>f</sup> At El Teh, February 5, 1884.<sup>a</sup> Egyptian Prime Minister.

need not trouble Your Majesty, and to consider the state of their intelligence from Egypt, especially with reference to the Soudan. General Gordon's arrival at Berber, officially announced, will now have enabled him to reply to the telegrams addressed to him on Thursday and Friday through Sir Evelyn Baring. The Cabinet however were of opinion that it might be advisable by a carefully constructed message to make it explicitly known to him that military proposals had been made in England for acting by a British force from and near Suakim, in aid of the policy of withdrawal, (which especially contemplates the case of the garrisons); and to obtain his judgment on the question whether such a plan would be beneficial or injurious to his mission. A telegram was accordingly drafted to this effect.

1023 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

[Telegram]

12 Feb. 1884.

Reports that Cabinet met today and with important letter from Colonel Stewart<sup>1</sup> before them were of opinion that force should be collected at once at Suakim with a view to relieving garrison at Tokar and to take measures for defence of ports Case urgent and necessary directions have been given.

1024 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 478.)

[Telegram]

OSBORNE. 12th February. 1884.

I am glad that my Government are prepared to act with energy at least may it not be too late to save other lives The fall of Sinkat is terrible.<sup>2</sup>

1025 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

HOUSE OF COMMONS. Feb. 15. 1884.

. . . Mr. Morley who began the debate supported the Government, approved the intervention, and protested against the assumption of indefinite responsibility, and desired early withdrawal. Mr. Morley spoke much upon the lines of Mr. Cobden, with marks of high cultivation, and great clearness and ability.

Mr. Balfour M.P. for Hertford, in a concise speech marked

<sup>1</sup> Attached to General Gordon.

<sup>2</sup> The garrison of Sinkat was massacred by Mahdists, February 8, 1884.

by neatness, acuteness and refinement, summed up the benefit and mischief of the intervention in Egypt by the present Government and appeared to think the mischief greatly preponderated. . . .

1026 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram] OSBORNE. 16th February. 1884.

Trust you will not invite Clemenceau to your house whatever his language may be now. He was concerned in some most horrible acts of the Commune. Regret that Sir. C. Dilke as a Cabinet Minister should have done so.

1027 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

[Telegram] 16th February. 1884.

Your Majesty's telegram received. Have felt that under the existing circumstances it would not be desirable for me to meet the gentleman named, and had signified as much early this day, thus going somewhat beyond Your Majesty's suggestion.

1028 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram] 17th February. 1884.

Your answer relative to M. Clemenceau was highly satisfactory. Am very sorry to find Lord Granville has not been so prudent.

1029 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

HOUSE OF COMMONS. Feb. 18. 1884.

Mr. Gladstone humbly reports to Your Majesty that, when he telegraphed to Your Majesty his intentions respecting M. Clemenceau, he was ignorant of the fact that that gentleman was visiting England under the direct countenance of the French Ambassador: and that Lord Granville had in consequence invited him to dinner. Had he known these circumstances he might have been obliged to use rather different language in writing to the friend of M. Clemenceau who addressed him. He trusts however that no occasion may arise during his visit for the revival of the question or for any alteration in his course.

1030 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

10, DOWNING STREET. 18 February. 1884.

. . . The principal subjects . . of discussion were the following two.

Sir Evelyn Baring, in concurrence with the authorities, having expressed an opinion that during the absence of the Suakim expedition an addition to the British force in Egypt would be prudent, which he fixes at two battalions, the Cabinet arranged with the proper Departments to make provision accordingly. Probably a battalion will go at once from Malta to Alexandria, and another will go from Gibraltar to Malta, and on from Malta if need be.

The second subject was the desire of the Sultan that the British Government should ask his leave to send troops to Suakim. On this subject the Cabinet agreed on the terms of a telegram which Lord Granville transmits to Your Majesty, and which Mr. Gladstone believes to be in conformity with Your Majesty's view.

1031 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

10, DOWNING STREET. Feb. 21. 1884.

Mr. Gladstone . . . reports to Your Majesty that the Cabinet met today mainly to consider recent telegrams from Egypt which Your Majesty will have seen.

They were of opinion that there would be the gravest objection to nominating by an assumption of British authority a successor to General Gordon in the Soudan,<sup>1</sup> nor did they as yet see sufficient reasons for going beyond General Gordon's Memorandum of January 25 by making special provisions for the Government of that country.

They also thought Zebir would not be regarded by public opinion in this country as qualified for such an office should it be created.

With regard to the proposal of a forward movement to Assouan, the Cabinet were prepared to agree to it so far as the Egyptian force was concerned, and British force would follow if found

<sup>1</sup> General Gordon had proposed the appointment of Zober Pasha to be his successor as Governor-General of the Sudan.

necessary at the time, the whole to be in that event commanded by a British Officer : but the Cabinet did not regard this arrangement as involving any increase of the aggregate British force in Egypt.

The Cabinet thought it would be well if a hint were conveyed to General Gordon to be less free in his communications with irresponsible persons. . . .

1032 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

Feb. 29. 1884.

Mr. Gladstone . . . reports to Your Majesty that the Cabinet, at a meeting today has been occupied with proceedings in Parliament and with Egyptian matters. . . .

In regard to Egypt they considered that it would be right to empower the authorities on the spot to send forward a portion of British troops to Assouan in company with the Egyptian force, if it should be found necessary.

They are to some extent embarrassed by the frequency and occasional contrariety of General Gordon's Proclamations and proposals : but they believe it their duty to give him, without infringing other duties, an unequivocal support.

As regards the future Government of the Soudan, they have asked whether an immediate decision is necessary, and have expressed a desire that General Gordon may be able to prosecute his work for some time. Also they have glanced at the question whether, if an arrangement has to be made for the succession, the Sultan should be invited to confirm it.

It was agreed that if any question is put in Parliament about a supposed dispatch of English troops to Khartoum, the answer should be that none have been sent, or ordered, or asked for.

Sir W. Harcourt<sup>1</sup> is to prepare suggestions as material for a dispatch to America respecting the Dynamite outrages.

1033 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

HOUSE OF COMMONS. *March 5. 1884.*

. . . Having received a new and urgent application from Sir Evelyn Baring in conjunction with General Gordon and Colonel Stewart to authorise the plan of sending Zobeir Pasha to Khar-

<sup>1</sup> Home Secretary



toum, the Cabinet drew a full telegram which stated that their difficulties and objections were not removed as to this proposal, and called for full information as to its bearing in several weighty respects, as well as to the extrication of the garrisons and the plan of consulting the chiefs or notables.

A telegram was also received from General Graham<sup>1</sup> in which it was proposed that he and the Admiral<sup>2</sup> should issue a proclamation denouncing Osman Digma as an impostor, and calling upon the chiefs and forces to disperse: in the event of his continuing to threaten Suakim, they were to force this dispersion: he did not anticipate any very serious resistance. Doubtless Your Majesty will refer to the terms of the telegram itself. Mr. Gladstone has to report that the Cabinet were satisfied with the proposals, and thought they ought to be authorized.

There was also conversation in the Cabinet as to the possibility of an understanding with the Sultan as to the Soudan and especially the ports of the Red Sea. . . .

1034

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

WINDSOR CASTLE. 27 March. 1884

Am greatly distressed at the news about Gordon and think Baring only Statesman of any feeling. British troops cannot be sent; but you told me when I last saw you Gordon must be trusted and supported and yet what he asked for repeatedly nearly five weeks ago has been refused. If not only for humanity's sake, for the honour of the Government and the nation he must not be abandoned.

— 1035 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 491-2.)

COOMBE WARREN 28th March. 1884. 1 p.m.

. . . Your Majesty refers, with your habitual accuracy, to the language in which Mr. Gladstone when last at Windsor signified his opinion that General Gordon should be trusted and supported Undoubtedly that was and is his opinion, and he thinks it is to a large extent the predisposition of his colleagues. On the other hand, he believes he also indicated to Your Majesty

<sup>1</sup> Commanding in the Eastern Sudan<sup>2</sup> Admiral Hewett.

a sense of difficulties which attach to any full action upon it, from the number and rapidity of his various declarations, in some instances from their want of consistency, and from his much too free communication with persons who act as correspondents of public journals. It would not be fair to this remarkable man to omit a reference to the most serious item of all, namely the very imperfect knowledge with which the Government are required at the shortest notice to form conclusions in respect to a peculiar, remote, and more than half-barbarous region, with which they have but a very slight and indirect connection in the ordinary sense, although character and responsibility are involved in all the transactions.

Mr. Gladstone thought yesterday, with Lord Granville and Lord Hartington whom he saw at this place, that British troops could not be sent to Khartoum, and he is much gratified to find that this opinion has the sanction of Your Majesty.

Sir Evelyn Baring has, Mr. Gladstone thinks, shown conspicuous ability and excellent sense in the office he holds: but the difficulties are such that it is no wonder if occasionally he treads awry.

On this occasion he makes a recommendation (in what can hardly be considered as an official document) that amounts to a reversal of policy; he overrides the most serious military difficulties; he acts, so far as it appears, alone; he proposes to provide for dangers to General Gordon, of the existence of which at the present moment Your Majesty's Government do not possess evidence; and he does this in ignorance of what are at the time General Gordon's circumstances, opinions, and desires.

In conversation here yesterday, the joint feeling was that an effort should be made to ascertain these, although it cannot be done with the rapidity which was ensured by the telegraph when it was open to Khartoum. The attainment of this end was contemplated by a telegram drawn yesterday evening in London, and concurred in by Mr. Gladstone. Mr. Gladstone hopes that it will draw from General Gordon valuable information, especially after the success which has happily attended the movements of General Graham. General Gordon is of course quite free to revert to the subject of his recommendation that Zebehr should be sent: a recommendation in declining which Mr. Gladstone thinks that the Cabinet may have been a good deal influenced by the fear

that, if it were adopted, a violent outburst of popular and Parliamentary feeling might at once compel its reversal.

Mr. Gladstone humbly joins with Your Majesty in the hope that, when adequate intelligence shall have been received from General Gordon, there will be every disposition to support him to the full extent which national interests will permit, and without too nice a computation of risks merely Ministerial.

1036 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to General Ponsonby*

COOMBE WARREN. 28th March. 1884.

The sad news from Cannes to-day<sup>1</sup> was so entirely strange and unexpected, without previous indication even of the remotest kind that it was stupefying as much as afflicting, and one is ashamed to think how the confusion of such moments prevents our conceiving all the deep pain, and shock of affliction, that come upon those most nearly concerned, the Queen and the widowed Duchess. . . .

I need not say how much I wish that I could offer any service to the Queen in connection with it: it would be a comfort as well as duty.

1037 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. March 29. 1884.

. . . She was much touched by your kind telegram yesterday. She did not sleep well—but is better today and I think very fairly recovered in spirits. Her health has not been in any way affected.

1038 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

COOMBE WARREN. March 29. 1884.

Mr. Gladstone being called upon to address Your Majesty to-day in the course of his public duty, cannot refrain from humbly tendering to Your Majesty, on his own and his wife's behalf, the respectful expression of the very deep sympathy with Your Majesty, with the bereaved Duchess of Albany, and with the Royal Family, which pervades the nation at large.

Your Majesty is well aware, from experience, how largely and how sincerely all the human consolations, which a loyal people

11 <sup>1</sup> Death of the Duke of Albany.

can offer, are laid at the feet of Your Majesty on every occasion of sorrow in the Royal Family.

Your Majesty's grief may at the moment be sharpened by the recollection how much of bright hope and promise will be laid in the grave of the Duke of Albany; but this same remembrance cannot but be a comfort to Your Majesty hereafter, for the high qualities which adorned the Duke of Albany have not ceased to exist, and cannot be as if they had never been.

Mr. Gladstone humbly trusts that the gracious support of the Almighty on this as on former occasions, will not be wanting to Your Majesty.

1039 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

COOMBE WARREN. *March 29. 1884.*

. . . The Cabinet considered several matters relating to the Soudan. Lord Hartington laid before them a telegram of instructions to General Gordon, which contemplates the use of pacific means and probably of some money to open the road to Berber, the release of the troops whose return home from India was arrested, and the return of the rest of General Graham's force to Egypt, with the delivery of Suakim into the charge of a battalion of Wood's army under Captain Chermiside who will be Governor of the place.

Lord Granville presented to the subject a draft of dispatch to Sir E. Baring, which is intended to sum up the case of the Gordon Mission. A few changes of the text were suggested.

1040 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. *March 30. 1884.*

The Queen asks me to explain to you that she is so overwhelmed with letters—all most kind—and having her daughter with her who she is comforting—that she has no time herself to write to you which otherwise she would have done to have thanked you and Mrs. Gladstone for your most kind sympathy.

The Queen is certainly better in spirits and her health has never suffered.

She is very busy making arrangements about the Duchess. This gives her a great deal of occupation which is a good thing. And yesterday evening she again spoke to me on public affairs—and her anxiety about Gordon. . . .

1041 *(Copy) Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

March 31. 1884.

Mr. Gladstone . . . apprises Your Majesty that he came this day to London from Coombe Warren and attended the House of Commons during the earlier part of its sitting.

He submitted the motion, of which notice had been given on his behalf for an Address to Your Majesty touching the lamentable intelligence from Cannes. It was received with profound interest, which was testified by the absolute silence and rapt attention of the House. . . .

1042 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. April 1. 1884.

An invitation will as a matter of course be sent to you for the funeral. But Her Majesty hopes you will not think of coming to it if you do not feel well enough to do so.

She was much touched by your going to the House yesterday for the vote of Condolence and hopes you did not suffer by it.

Her Majesty is much better.

## 1043

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. April 2. 1884.

The Queen has been so overwhelmed with the amount of kind & sympathizing Telegrams & letters at this time of terrible bereavement, that she could hardly write any letters. She would also have replied sooner to Mr. Gladstone's kind letter. The Queen thanks him now most sincerely & would wish him to express the same to Mrs. Gladstone & to all his Colleagues.

It is most soothing & gratifying to the Queen to see not only the universal sympathy with herself & her dear daughter-in-law, but also to observe the high appreciation of her darling Child's talents, & the deep regret at the loss of one who would have been such use to his Country—having inherited so many of his Majesty's great Father's qualities & gifts ! But what is the Queen's Royal grief to that of his dear young wife, who adored him—& Your Majesty crushed ?—

how sincerely all deep affliction in the most admirable manner, so & with such un murmuring, unselfish resignation

—always thinking of others ! It is most touching to see her, & her load of sorrow & desolation w<sup>ld</sup> melt a heart of stone. Thank God her health has not suffered.

The Queen hopes Mr. Gladstone is well again ? She much admired his & Sir S. Northcote's Speeches—on this sad event.

1044 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

10, DOWNING STREET. *April 3. 1884.*

Mr. Gladstone gratefully acknowledges with his humble duty Your Majesty's most interesting letter, and the gracious inquiry with which it closes.

He labours under no serious ailment of any kind, but Sir A. Clark finds some difficulty in bringing him up to that level of full strength which alone is at all adequate to cover the partial discharge of his Parliamentary and other duties as they now stand.

He has come up from Coombe Warren today to attend the House, in consequence of an intimation from Sir Stafford Northcote of a question which appears to portend another Egyptian discussion ; but he hopes to return in the evening, and remain in the country if possible until Monday.

1045 *Marchioness of Ely to Mr. Gladstone*

[*Telegram*]

DARMSTADT. *17th April. 1884.*

The Queen has arrived safely and well Wishes to know how you are.

1046 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

*April 21. 1884.*

. . . As great apprehensions prevail at Berber, and Hassan Halifa, commanding there, might make terms with the hostile tribes if no support can be given him, the Cabinet deemed that it would be wise to inquire from Mr. Egerton, acting for Sir E. Baring at Cairo, whether there are any available means of aiding him at once by negotiation or otherwise.

They likewise conversed at some length on the last demand of General Gordon for a body of Turkish troops whom he proposes to employ in the extrication of the garrisons and the "smashing" as he has termed it of the Mahdi. The Cabinet appeared to feel

that General Gordon, who was dispatched on a mission essentially pacific, has found himself, from whatever cause, unable to prosecute it effectually, and has now proposed the use of military means which may fail and which if they succeed may be found to mean a new subjugation of the Soudan, the very consummation which it was the object of Gordon's mission to avert. The Cabinet felt this matter to be grave and they will resume the consideration of it to-morrow when other matters will likewise be before them. . . .

1047 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

April 23. 1884.

. . . The Cabinet also consider that the time has arrived when instructions should be addressed to General Gordon declining to adopt suggestions for supplying him with forces intended to undertake military expeditions in the Soudan, as at variance with the scope of his pacific mission; but also desiring him to keep the Government informed to the best of his ability with respect to any danger prospective or immediate to his position in Khartoum, and to advise fully as to any force which he might deem to be necessary to ensure his removal in safety. These instructions, which Your Majesty will see in a more extended form, should be accompanied with expressions (as the Cabinet think) of respect and grateful acknowledgment for the services he has rendered.

1048 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. April 24. 1884.

It is satisfactory to The Queen to observe that you consider it doubtful whether justice is properly vindicated under the present form of Acquittal on the ground of insanity in cases of attempting to take away life made by eccentric individuals. . . .

Punishment deters not only sane men but also eccentric men whose supposed involuntary acts are really produced by a diseased brain capable of being acted upon by external influences. A knowledge that they would be protected by an acquittal on the grounds of insanity will encourage such men to commit desperate acts while on the other hand a certainty that they will not escape punishment will terrify them into the preservation of a peaceful attitude towards others.

1049 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*10, DOWNING STREET, WHITEHALL. *May 17. 1884.*

. . . The Cabinet considered it would be right to send at once a Telegram to General Gordon for the purpose of authorising him to use money freely in promoting the removal of the Egyptian Garrison at Khartoum, and of others who might on other grounds have special claims ; and also desiring him to consider and report upon, or if feasible to adopt at the first proper moment measures for the purpose of such removal with a special regard to his own safety and that of British subjects. This is a description of what will be a somewhat lengthened Telegram, and the moment is important as openings are announced from Cairo for communication with General Gordon. . . .

1050 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 500-1 )WINDSOR CASTLE. *May 17. 1884.*

In order to prevent your misapprehending The Queen's views in objecting to the fixed limit of 5 years for our occupation of Egypt I may explain that Her Majesty has no wish to prolong our stay without necessity in that Country, but The Queen maintains emphatically that it would be unjust to this Country and to future Governments to make a promise now which it may be impossible to keep in the future without making serious sacrifices.)

If the present Government are then in office they would be able to defend the policy they now advocate, but another Ministry would find themselves hampered by this blind engagement and The Queen (if she now approved) would be involved in the difficulties which may arise from definitely fixing the policy of this Country 5 years in advance.

In his last despatch to Lord Lyons,<sup>1</sup> Lord Granville declares himself ready to give an assurance that we should retire as soon as we could do so without inconvenience and The Queen would be ready to approve of these words but she must protest against our giving a promise to France that come what may we shall leave Egypt in May, 1889.

<sup>1</sup> Ambassador in Paris.



1051 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to General Ponsonby*

18th May. 1884.

I think I can venture to say

1. That the view of the Government in no way includes any separate engagement with *France*.

2. That it does not contemplate any *secret* engagement whatever; from those we have suffered much and the burnt child dreads the fire.

3. That it does not imply necessary withdrawal from Egypt at a given time. Some will hope withdrawal may be possible within a time shorter than 5 years; some may desire one longer. All that is contemplated is that if longer it shall be (at least) with assent of the Powers who by the law of Europe have authority in respect to Egypt greater than that of any single state.

I am very glad that the Queen does not desire to prolong our stay except in the case of necessity; and according to the view of the Cabinet as I understand it (and this letter is of course mine, not theirs) we should have the aid in judging about that necessity, of the highest authority known to public law.

1052 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

10, DOWNING STREET. WHITEHALL. May 24. 1884.

Mr. Gladstone . . . introduces his report of the Cabinet of today with humbly tendering his best wishes, on the recurrence of Your Majesty's birthday, for a long and happy future to Your Majesty's life and reign. The Cabinet first of all considered what course they were to adopt with regard to the proposal which will be made to introduce a Parliamentary franchise for women into the Franchise Bill.

Without pronouncing any positive opinion on the merits of the proposal, the Cabinet consider that it is essential to avoid the importation of new Franchises into the Bill, for fear of affording any reasonable or plausible cause for its rejection in the House of Lords and all the evils and even dangers that would thence ensue.

The Cabinet also authorised Mr. Gladstone, very much with the same prudential views, to introduce into the Bill a date postponing its operation, in case the course of discussion should make it appear desirable. . . .

1053 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*BALMORAL CASTLE. *May* 28. 1884.

The Queen thanks Mr. Gladstone for several letters & for his good wishes for her birthday w<sup>h</sup> was a vy sad one in many, many ways.

She returns the Newspapers which he sent her. Mr. B. Carpenter<sup>1</sup> was *brought* up—as he himself said to the Queen—in the Evangelical School, but he has for some time past been what w<sup>ld</sup> be termed broad, but w<sup>h</sup> really is—the only true enlightened, Christian & intellectual view of religion w<sup>h</sup> exists. . . .

1054 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 506.)BALMORAL CASTLE. *May* 30. 1884.

. . . She is sorry to see that Mr. Gladstone thinks even the 5 years should *not* be adhered to if the French wish to make a stand upon it. This the Queen c<sup>ld</sup> not consent to—really for the honour of this Country but still more on account of the extreme danger of finding ourselves hampered to such an extent as to be *obliged* to leave Egypt (& without *any* Troops *anywhere* she feels strongly convinced we can *not* do it for much longer)—when that Country is still in so unsettled a state, as to be a danger to Europe.—

The assistance Mr. Gladstone proposed w<sup>ld</sup> bring it to only 3 years &  $\frac{1}{2}$ . Four years—the Queen thinks ought to be the *vy shortest time* admissible.

What is going to be done about G<sup>l</sup>. Gordon ?

1055 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 508.)BALMORAL CASTLE. *June* 5. 1884.

. . . She cannot alter her *decided* opinion that to put *any* limit to our occupation of Egypt—as vy *fatal* mistake. But to lessen the 5 years *even*—when the state of Egypt is such that one cannot at all foresee any speedy improvement (in wh. case other Powers w<sup>ld</sup> *inevitably* step in)—w<sup>ld</sup> be most *shortsighted* & truckling to insolent France, & have the vy worst effect & results.—*One year*—

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Boyd Carpenter.

if a g<sup>t</sup> object is to be obtained (it might be yielded) but *not more*— & the Queen will *not* give *her consent* to it.

How *often & often* on many questions within the last few years have her warnings been disregarded & alas ! (when too late) justified !—

Let this not happen again now !

### 1056 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

HAWARDEN. *June 7. 1884.*

Mr. Gladstone with his humble duty acknowledges Your Majesty's letter of the fifth, which he had the honour to receive this morning. He is concerned to find that his observations on the comparative want of significance in the difference between 3½ and 5 years have not appeared to Your Majesty worthy of consideration, but he in no way recedes from his statement that the fixing of any term will probably be the object of strong attack.

He has at once telegraphed to Your Majesty to say that yesterday as he learns from Lord Granville<sup>1</sup> the French simply accepted the terms which the Cabinet before the Recess, as Your Majesty is aware, had approved of his offering, and thereby placed the matter beyond the discretion of Your Majesty's advisers. Also to say that the Cabinet meets on Monday.

In the regular course, the next step would be that notes should be exchanged between Lord Granville and Mr. Waddington<sup>2</sup> on the basis of what had passed between them.

It is understood that if the financial plans fail in the Conference the preliminary arrangement falls to the ground, so that it is contingent only on something as yet necessarily uncertain.

Mr. Gladstone could hardly with propriety refer to the closing part of Your Majesty's letter, further than humbly and dutifully to say that with much pain his Colleagues and he himself have at various junctures found that their views upon questions oversea were not in accord with those of Your Majesty. . . .

### 1057

### *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[*Telegram*]

*7th June. 1884.*

Received your Cypher conclude that "our terms" means five years I protest against anything short of four years and wish this to be known by the Cabinet.

<sup>1</sup> Foreign Secretary

<sup>2</sup> French Ambassador in London.

1058

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

7th June. 1884.

Have seen account negotiations only this evening and am surprised and greatly annoyed to see my strong objection to reduction of term of years expressed some days ago again totally disregarded Have you consulted Mr. Baring<sup>1</sup> If not you should do so.

1059 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

[Telegram]

7th June. 1884.

Your Majesty's telegram received Will not fail to obey injunction.

1060 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

HOUSE OF COMMONS. 9th June. 1884.

Mr. Gladstone has had the honour, on arriving in London to-day, to receive Your Majesty's message through Sir H. Ponsonby respecting the term of years named in the correspondence with the French Government, and he has also seen the letter yesterday addressed by Lord Granville<sup>2</sup> to Your Majesty on the same subject, in which he has presented to Your Majesty's view the alternative difficulties which Your Majesty's advisers might have to face.

One of those alternatives, and not the least likely, upon the failure of the recent communications, would be the Egyptian Bankruptcy: an event, the contemplation of which, Mr. Gladstone freely owns, fills him with consternation. It is impossible to conceive anything more disparaging to the credit of this country, or more difficult to deal with in regard to the daily and inexorable necessities it would entail. From the position it would create, England would in all probability be unable to escape, except by undertaking enormous liabilities, which would create in the nation just and perhaps angry discontent.

Mr. Gladstone is persuaded that if it had been possible to convey clearly in writing to Your Majesty's mind the mutual inter-dependence of the various points of this almost hopelessly complicated case, Your Majesty would have seen that it would be an error on the part of the Cabinet, in the view of such perilous alternatives, to break away from the Conference and the hope of

<sup>1</sup> Sir E. Baring, Agent and Consul-General in Egypt<sup>2</sup> Foreign Secretary

an European settlement except on grounds of very great weight and solidity.

Mr. Gladstone has in his reports on the several Cabinets stated to Your Majesty very succinctly the views which were taken ; there was every effort made, without an indecorous haggling, to maintain the term of 5 years originally named ; but the feeling was that a small difference in the length of term would in no quarter be recognised as an element entitled to sway vitally the decision of so great a case.

1061 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

10, DOWNING STREET. *June 10. 1884.*

Mr. Gladstone reports to Your Majesty with his humble duty that the Cabinet met today when, as has now become so usual, it was almost wholly occupied with Egyptian matters.

Lord Hartington<sup>1</sup> laid before the Cabinet a representation from Sir A. Clark<sup>2</sup> in favour of dispatching at once to Suakim the material necessary for making the commencement of a Railway.

The Cabinet agreed to the steps proposed.

They have no fresh reason to anticipate the necessity of an expedition for the relief of General Gordon.

But if such necessity should arise, the aid of a Railway would be almost indispensable, and the construction of one would require so long a time that it seems indispensable to take certain steps by way of provision for the contingency although remote.

The Cabinet will probably place upon record the view with which they propose to adopt preparatory measures.

Mr. Gladstone was obliged to leave the Cabinet before it closed to attend the debate on woman-suffrage ; but it was occupied in reviewing the work in which Lord Hartington is engaged, namely formulating his agreement with Mr. Waddington.<sup>3</sup>

1062 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

10, DOWNING STREET. *June 12. 1884.*

Mr. Gladstone humbly tenders, on his daughter's part and his own, grateful thanks for Your Majesty's most gracious notice of the short article in the *Contemporary Review* relating to the

<sup>1</sup> Secretary for War

<sup>2</sup> Sir A. Clarke, R E , Inspector-General of Fortifications

<sup>3</sup> French Ambassador in London.

letters of the Grand Duchess. Mr. Gladstone, though he thought the work well intended and not unworthily executed, scrupled to trouble Your Majesty on the subject, and is all the more sensible, on this account, of the kindness and value of Your Majesty's spontaneous commendation.

Due notice has been taken of Your Majesty's observation on the absence of politics from the correspondence, which it is so easy for him to understand.

He did not see the article until it appeared in the *Review*.

### 1063 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

HOUSE OF COMMONS. *June 12-13. 1884. 12½ a.m.*

. . . It certainly appeared to Mr. Gladstone who on this subject is tolerably impartial, that the opponents of woman-suffrage had tonight the best of the argument.

When the movement began, about 1867, there were still remaining in our laws many gross cases of inequality as against women. Many of these have been removed, and if an equitable spirit continues to prevail, the arguments on the side of admission will be seriously weakened.

Between 12 and 1 the House divided when there appeared

For the Woman Suffrage	135
Against it	271
Majority	136

The minority was estimated to be composed of about 100 Conservatives and over 30 Liberals. . . .

### 1064 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

HOUSE OF COMMONS. *June 19-20. 1884. 12.30 a.m.*

. . . Mr. Gladstone presumes to add the expression of his rejoicing, and his humble congratulations on the arrival of another anniversary added to the long roll of Your Majesty's happy reign.

### 1065 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

BALMORAL CASTLE. *June 21. 1884.*

The Queen thanks Mr. Gladstone for his congratulations on her accession day. 47 Years is a long time & the last 23 have been full of growing cares & unusually severe trials, bereavements & sorrows. They are telling on her health & strength.

The depression of Spirits accompany the Queen everywhere—& she cannot give a vy favourable account of herself, & how can it be otherwise ? . . .

1066

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*BALMORAL CASTLE. *June 21. 1884.*

. . . On the eve of his explanation to the House of Commons the Queen cannot refrain from recording her deep concern at the course taken by the Gov<sup>t</sup>; a course which will *not* produce any favourable effect on France, & a very unfavourable one in the rest of Europe. We stood in a high position, we had supreme power in Egypt w<sup>h</sup> it is most important we sh<sup>ld</sup> have—& we have now sacrificed these, by fixing a term—& a vy short one—for our evacuation of that Country—w<sup>h</sup> must have a vy bad effect there.

Is a present financial difficulty of more importance than the large question of our interests in Egypt involving as they do the far larger & all important ones of India ?

The Queen most truly & deeply deprecates the course w<sup>h</sup> has been decided on—& w<sup>h</sup> she is sure will cause much alarm in this Country.

She wishes Mr. Gladstone to communicate her views to the Cabinet.

1067

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 509-10)WINDSOR CASTLE. *June 28. 1884.*

. . . *No one* can more deeply regret any great divergence of opinion between the two Houses of Parl<sup>t</sup>—& especially anything approaching to a collision, than she does. But on the other hand she *does* think that the House of Lords *cannot* be expected merely to acquiesce in & pass a Bill, of vital importance to the balance & well-being of the British Constitution, w<sup>h</sup> has been carried thro' the House of Commons.

The House of Lords must give its opinion & c<sup>ld</sup> not be respected if it did not do so—It is for this reason that the Queen cannot but regret the strong language used by the Prime Minister on Thursday night & trusts that he will adopt a more conciliatory tone, w<sup>h</sup> w<sup>ld</sup> be far more likely to conduce to an impartial & peaceful solution of the many difficulties w<sup>h</sup> are so threatening at present.

<sup>1</sup> On the Franchise Bill.

1068 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 510-11.)

10, DOWNING STREET. 30th June. 1884.

Mr. Gladstone begs to acknowledge, with his humble duty Your Majesty's letter of Saturday, in which Your Majesty has, with a condescending frankness, expressed regret at strong language presumed to have been used by him in a speech on the Third Reading of the Franchise Bill in the House of Commons.

If Mr. Gladstone has, contrary to his intention, used any language of an unbecoming character in relation to the House of Lords, it is a serious error, and must cause him deep concern ; but he observes that Your Majesty has not pointed out any language of this character as employed by him.

He felt it to be impossible, after all that had occurred, to maintain to the close an absolute silence in regard to the manner, little less than insulting, in which the House of Commons had been treated. Long before the Bill was approaching the House of Lords, Lord Salisbury had, at one or more public meetings, threatened its rejection. His nephew and Private Secretary<sup>1</sup> had made bold to indicate in the House of Commons the same result ; and the same thing had been done by Mr. Lowther, from the front bench of the Opposition in language alike violent and boastful.

It was not however for the sake of the House of Commons mainly that Mr. Gladstone spoke, but for the sake of the House of Lords, and with a view to the peaceful maintenance of our Parliamentary Constitution.

Twice, in his recollection, the House of Lords has gone into a distinct conflict with the House of Commons ; and both times it has suffered severely. When in 1831 it had (not in Mr. Gladstone's judgment without much excuse) rejected a Reform Bill, it had to undergo the humiliation of passing a like measure after a few months under threat of a creation of Peers which would have wholly overborne its independence. When in 1860 it rejected (again not without some excuse) the Paper Duties Bill, it virtually lost all power of dealing with taxing Bills, and since that epoch financial debates in that House have all but ceased.

When conduct much more rash is openly and repeatedly threatened, without the smallest check or protest from any Tory

<sup>1</sup> Mr A. J. Balfour.



quarter, Mr. Gladstone cannot by persistent silence appear to think lightly of these or other such crises, and is compelled by his duty to the Crown to make some effort to avert them, always however subject to the condition that it is done in proper and respectful language.

1069 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

10, DOWNING STREET. 9th July. 1884.

Mr. Gladstone reports to Your Majesty with his humble duty that Your Majesty's Servants have today been occupied principally in considering the advice they should tender to Your Majesty with reference to the situation created by the vote of the House of Lords last night against the second reading of the Franchise Bill.

They find a precedent of great importance applicable in its main outlines to the present case. It is the conduct pursued by the Government of Lord Grey on the rejection of the Reform Bill of 1831, in October of that year, by a majority of 41 Peers. Business was wound up, Parliament prorogued, and a new Session commenced after a short interval. An opportunity was thus offered to the House of Lords for reconsideration.

Acting on the main lines of this precedent, the Cabinet advise that Supply should be put forward, that any further attempt at seriously contested legislation should be abandoned, and that the Session of Parliament should be brought rapidly to a close; subject however to any arrangement which may be rendered necessary by the deliberations of the Conference on the financial affairs of Egypt.

Your Majesty's Servants would further advise that a separate and second Session of Parliament should be held in the autumn, for the special, and apart from unforeseen contingencies or exceptional demands, the sole purpose of completing the legislation of the present year, by again presenting the Franchise Bill to the House of Lords, which it is hoped will with further information and reflection, decline to repeat the operation of this morning.

The Cabinet did not arrive at these conclusions without gratefully considering Your Majesty's gracious message concerning communications with the Opposition,<sup>1</sup> and also the possibility of

<sup>1</sup> General Ponsonby had been sent to London to suggest a possibility of intervention by the Queen.

what is still open in point of form namely further proceeding on the Franchise Bill itself. But, although they desired so lately as yesterday a form of giving a solemn sanction, and thereby the most stringent obligation to their promise to bring in a Redistribution Bill (which was unhappily declined by the Opposition), and although they will at all times look anxiously for means of accommodating in so grave a case, they feel that the present posture of affairs does not allow of any opening for a proceeding which would imply going back from the late vote.

Tomorrow at 4 Mr. Gladstone will be expected by the Opposition, conformably to his promise, to explain the intentions of Ministers with regard to the course of business for the residue of the Session ; and the Government have felt that a previous explanation to their own supporters would be requisite. These gentlemen will therefore meet at the Foreign Office tomorrow at 2.30.

Mr. Gladstone has requested Lord Granville to open the matter to Your Majesty at Windsor, and he humbly craves Your Majesty's sanction for the course which Your Majesty's Servants have projected.

It is their expectation that there will be much discussion in the Country, but it will not be promoted by the inclination of the administration, and should members of the Government be called upon to take part in meetings at places wherewith they may be specially connected, their desire will be, to the best of their ability, to keep to the practical aspects of the question without entering upon speculative matter or widening the field of controversy.

1070

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 512-13)

WINDSOR CASTLE. July 10. 1884.

The Queen has to acknowledge Mr. Gladstone's letter of yesterday.—

She will not withhold her assent to Mr. Gladstone's proposal for an autumn Session in order to reconsider the Franchise Bill—but in doing so, she *must* express her opinion that it would have been *a more fair & judicious* course to have obtained the *opinion* of the *Country* on the question raised in the House of Lords.

This would have prevented any agitation wh the Queen fears may be raised by the postponement of the measure.

The opinion of the people constitutionally given at the polling booths is far more valuable than the excitement forced on by noisy demagogues.

The Queen is glad to observe Mr. Gladstone's assurance that the Members of the Government will not promote or support any such agitation.

1071 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

10, DOWNING STREET. *July 10. 1884.*

Mr. Gladstone humbly thanks Your Majesty for the letters he has just had the honour to receive and for Your Majesty's sanction to the plans advised by the Cabinet.

Mr. Gladstone trusts that Your Majesty found no obscurity in the closing paragraph of his letter of yesterday, in which he stated his belief that the Ministers would not take the initiative in promoting the public discussions which they think likely to take place, and that where they might be under special calls to declare their sentiments they would endeavour to avoid stirring controversy at the present juncture on organic questions.

1072 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[*Telegram*]

WINDSOR. *11th July. 1884.*

Sir C. Dilke<sup>1</sup> has already begun to attack Peers. You told me in the winter that he and Mr. Chamberlain<sup>2</sup> must be told to be prudent in their language out of Parliament for the future. If you wish for future conciliation, threats and abuse of the House of Lords must not proceed from members of the Government.

1073 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 513-14)

10, DOWNING STREET. *11th July. 1884.*

Mr. Gladstone has the honour to acknowledge with his humble duty Your Majesty's ciphered telegram, in which it is stated that Sir Charles Dilke has already begun to attack the Peers.

Sir C. Dilke stated to the Cabinet that he was engaged to speak on Wednesday to his constituents ; and from this engagement he could not properly withdraw.

<sup>1</sup> Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs.

<sup>2</sup> President of the Board of Trade

It appears therefore that the occasion of his speaking was not self sought.

If Your Majesty will graciously point out any language used by Sir Charles Dilke which attacks the constitution of the House of Lords (for Mr. Gladstone has himself had no time to read the speech) Mr. Gladstone will lose no time in expostulating with him on a course, which would have been at variance with the assurance given to Your Majesty.

But the whole contention of the Government is that the House of Lords has committed a gross and deplorable error, and Your Majesty will be the first to see that, when occasion calls on them to speak, they must, in becoming language, endeavour to enforce this error, and to prevent its repetition by what they deem just reasoning.

Mr. Gladstone has felt a great anxiety that there should be no mistake as to the assurances, which he ventured to convey to Your Majesty about the House of Lords.

He stated yesterday to the Liberal majority, assembled at the Foreign Office, his own intention to avoid at the present time all discussion as to the character, recent history, composition, and future prospects of the House of Lords.

Being very desirous to know whether he could reckon on the concurrence of Sir C. Dilke and Mr. Chamberlain in this view, he requested an interview with them last night, and found that they were quite satisfied with the basis thus laid down.

Mr. Gladstone considers that this undertaking covers the whole period between this date and the next submission of the Bill to the House of Lords.

Should the prophecies of Mr. Balfour then be fulfilled there will be a new point of departure, and Mr. Gladstone does not conceal from Your Majesty his conviction, his painful conviction, that new and grave issues will be raised. But he will use no language of this kind in public.

•

. . . She certainly thinks it would have been more in accordance with the assurance given her by Mr. Gladstone if Sir Charles

Dilke at the outset had avoided the allusion to the House of Lords wh he made in his Speech, but after the explanation given her by Mr. Gladstone it is unnecessary to revert to this point.

The Queen believes that Mr. Gladstone agrees with her desire that the question of the Franchise & its connection with re-distribution should be discussed in a *fair & calm* spirit.

The Queen therefore trusts that bitter recrimination & personal disputes may be avoided on both sides.

As she has already said, the Queen w<sup>ld</sup> decidedly have preferred to have heard the opinion of the people on the question legally expressed at a general election ; but since her Ministers think that the views of the Country may be learnt from the Meetings and Speeches of the Recess it is the bounden *duty* of the Government to *prevent* the movement from degenerating into a senseless & turbulent agitation w<sup>h</sup> may lead to deplorable consequences.

Mr. Gladstone's promise to introduce a Redistribution Bill next Session & to do his best to pass it, is a proof that he does not consider the wish of those who desire that such a measure should be enacted before a general Election, is unjust, & the Queen must earnestly impress upon Mr. Gladstone the importance of *maintaining* the Constitutional Balance & of opposing the demands of those who desire to wreck existing Institutions.

### 1075 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 516-18.)

10, DOWNING STREET, WHITEHALL. 14<sup>th</sup> July. 1884.

. . . Mr. Gladstone has, in public and in private, done all in his power to keep every question relating to the general merits of the House of Lords, and to its future constitution, entirely outside of and apart from the discussions, and very warm discussions, which (should the present efforts fail) are sure to take place in the three months that have to elapse between the present date and an October Session.

He has no expectation of complete success in this attempt, but he thinks and hopes many will be influenced by the example which Ministers will set by their own conduct and language.

A main reason with Mr. Gladstone for entertaining, not less

warmly perhaps even than Your Majesty, the desire to separate effectually between the recent act of the House of Lords and its general position and constitution, is the conviction he entertains that a repetition of the act in the autumn will in all likelihood bring into question that position and constitution.

Mr. Gladstone knows, like the rest of the world, how formidable an opponent the House of Lords has habitually been, and especially for the last 30 years, to the Liberal party, which has had the nearly uniform assent of the nation.

He perceives with pain that the tendency of the Lords to separate from the people becomes more marked with the lapse of years, indicated as it is by the increase of the Tory majority in that House.

Nevertheless he is willing, for himself, to continue to bear what has been borne so long, rather than to run the risk of seeing the wreck, as Your Majesty has phrased it, of an existing institution.

Great discretion and moderation in the use of a vast and wholly irresponsible power will probably suffice to prolong, and that possibly even for a lengthened period, the existence and use of that power—but in no other way known to Mr. Gladstone can it be done. . . .

With respect to the suggestion, fully considered by the Cabinet, that the Parliament might have been dissolved on the occasion of the recent vote, Your Majesty has not perhaps been fully informed as to the depth and strength of the objections that are felt to such a plan.

Mr. Gladstone will not trouble Your Majesty with details, beyond observing that at no period of our history known to him, has the House of Commons been dissolved at the call of the House of Lords, given through an adverse vote; that in his opinion the establishment of such a principle, would place the House of Commons in a position of inferiority, as a Legislative Chamber, to the House of Lords, and that the attempt to establish it would certainly end in organic changes, detrimental to the dignity and authority of the House of Lords.

A portion of the Liberal party are at this moment undoubtedly in harmony with the Tory Leaders in so far that they desire the crisis should not be terminated, but prolonged. Your Majesty may rely on the exertions of the Cabinet in the opposite direction.

And Mr. Gladstone presumes to express his hearty and entire

concurrence with Your Majesty's desire that a just<sup>h</sup>e House of Redistribution shall precede the next general election. explanation serious obstacle to the attainment of this end, except to this prolonged opposition by the House of Lords to the pass Franchise Bill.

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1076

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 519-20)

or personal

WINDSOR CASTLE. July 15.

The Queen thanks Mr. Gladstone for his letter rec<sup>d</sup> the question. She is sorry that she *cannot* agree with him in his opi<sup>n</sup> ministers the House of Lords w<sup>h</sup> has rendered such important s<sup>er</sup> the the Nation & w<sup>h</sup> at this moment is believed to represent the the feeling of the Country. The House of Lords is in no way opp<sup>o</sup> to a to the *people*.

The existence of an independent body of men acting solely in the good of the Country & free from the terror w<sup>h</sup> forces so many Commoners to vote against their consciences, is an element of strength in the state & a guarantee for its welfare & freedom.—

To protect the Moderate Men from being swamped by extreme partizans as the Peers now desire to do, is an object in which in itself, Mr. Gladstone himself concurs, & the Queen cannot therefore, understand why this legitimate act of theirs is to expose them to the storm which noisy agitators for *their own* ends are preparing to raise against the House of Lords.

Many most useful measures for the benefit of the *people at large*, w<sup>h</sup> had taken a long time to pass in the House of Commons, passed the House of Lords at once !

The Queen fears that the passions once roused by an imaginary grievance will not be easily quelled but will threaten the existence of the Monarchy & the stability of the Empire itself !

Those who do not do *all* in their power to prevent such wild & senseless passion from being raised incur a frightful responsibility ! . . .

1077 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

HOUSE OF COMMONS. 16th July. 1884.

Mr. Gladstone reports to Your Majesty, . . . that the Cabinet met today to discuss various Egyptian affairs.

They conversed much on the embarrassment which arises out of the want of direct and authentic information from Khartoum, and on the condition of Upper Egypt and the capabilities of the Nile route. The Cabinet agreed that another battalion might be sent to Egypt from the Mediterranean, according to the request of General Stephenson, and with a view to strengthen the frontier. . . .

1078 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

10, DOWNING STREET. *July 17. 1884.*

In acknowledging, with his humble duty Your Majesty's letter of the 15th, Mr. Gladstone has little to add to the statement which he felt that loyal duty required him to lay before Your Majesty. He may, however, say that if he believed the House of Lords were expressing the sense of the people, he would be the last person to advise Your Majesty in a contrary sense; and that while Your Majesty most truly observes on Mr. Gladstone's desire to protect the moderate men against extreme partisans, he regards the recent vote as one certain to strengthen extreme partisans against moderate men.

Yet though he regards the prospect as a menacing one, he feels strongly that the Monarchy of this Country need not and should not be in any way compromised by any struggle likely to take place.

1079 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

10, DOWNING STREET. *July 23. 1884.*

Mr. Gladstone humbly reports that he has had the honour to receive, through Sir Henry Ponsonby, an extract purporting to be from a speech of Mr. Herbert Gladstone at Leeds.

Mr. Gladstone has in consequence sent for the Leeds paper (which is of course entirely at Your Majesty's command), and he finds the sense of the speech to be perfectly distinct—The Speaker considers that the House of Lords is, by the law of its constitution, a purely and perfectly Tory assembly in all political matters, out of harmony with the prevailing sense of the nation, and that it ought to be reformed; but that this is not the time for it. The extract which Your Majesty sends is garbled. It ends with the sentence "let them never rest until it is reformed;" while that sentence in the report of the Speech proceeds "but for the present we have set our hand to another plough, and let us not turn back



from it," with more to the same effect, showing that reform of the House of Lords is not the question of the day.

Mr. Gladstone himself, while he has been sharply sensible of the injurious action of the House of Lords upon all Liberal Governments and legislation during the last quarter of a century, desires not that the House of Lords should be reformed, but that it should use its power with moderation; and he deeply deploras its present attitude because he knows how powerfully it tends to precipitate a great organic question.

But a constituency like that of Leeds, which represents in a high degree the energy of Yorkshire, is filled with a sentiment of indignation at what has taken place; and Mr. Gladstone can well believe it was hardly possible for his son at this time to withhold the expression of his opinion on a subject which the conduct of the majority of the Peers has unfortunately placed in such prominence; while at the same time he endeavoured to direct practical efforts towards a different aim.

Mr. Gladstone does not think it practicable to impose on all the members of the Administration the *same* degree of restraint as he hopes and believes the members of the Cabinet will endure, and regard must be had to the varieties of constituencies—but all that Mr. Gladstone can fairly do will be done in conformity with the assurances he has given to Your Majesty in regard to the present stage of the controversy, which he sincerely hopes (though he dares not do more than hope) may be its last.

1080 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria.*

10, DOWNING STREET. *July 24. 1884.*

As Your Majesty deigned to notice expressions recently attributed to Mr. Herbert Gladstone, Mr. Gladstone with his humble duty presumes to submit to Your Majesty a copy of the *Yorkshire Post*, a high Tory newspaper, with a leading article in which Mr. H. Gladstone is commended for the moderation of his views, compared with those prevailing among the Liberals of Leeds, in regard to the House of Lords.

1081

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 522-3.)

*Confidential.*

CLAREMONT. *July 25. 1884.*

The Queen had *not* intended replying to Mr. Gladstone's letter of the 23rd but she feels bound to observe upon the language of

*defiance* in the Speech of one of the Cabinet Ministers<sup>1</sup>—one who she has long considered as most dangerous in the Cabinet & one to whom she fears Mr. Gladstone is incline to listen far more than to those who hold moderate opinions. This Speech wh<sup>h</sup> Mr. Gladstone sh<sup>ld</sup> read is most dangerous—& tending to stir up class ag<sup>t</sup> class in a vy reckless manner. Mr. Gladstone in his letter to the Queen says “he does not think it practicable to impose on all members of the Administration the *same* degree of restraint as he *hopes & believes* the *Members of the Cabinet* will endure, *but all that Mr. Gladstone can fairly do will be done in conformity with the assurance he has given to Your Majesty in regard to the present stage of the Controversy.*”

Since Mr. Gladstone gave her these assurances (wh<sup>h</sup> he did *repeatedly*) hardly a day passes without some *violent & contemptuous* language towards the H<sup>e</sup> of Lds being used by people *belonging* to the Administration and Mr. Gladstone *must* feel—that language coming from the Son of the Prime Minister *must* be & *will* be considered by the masses as *inspired by his father.*—

According to Mr. Gladstone's observations—there ought to be a Radical House of Lords (for it is *not* the Moderate Liberals—but the *Radicals*—many of whom sh<sup>ld</sup> be called *Destructives* who are *supposed* to represent the *people*) as well as the H<sup>se</sup> of Commons so that *any* radical measure sh<sup>ld</sup> pass! The Monarchy w<sup>ld</sup> be utterly untenable were there *no balance* of power left, *no* restraining power! The Queen will yield to no one in *true liberal feeling*, but *not* to *destruction* & she *calls upon* Mr. Gladstone to *restrain* as *he can* some of his wild Colleagues & followers.

Mr. Gladstone has gt power over his Cabinet & he sh<sup>ld</sup> exert for the benefit of peace & not allow Agitators or Demagogues to mislead the people.

The Duke of Argyll made an excellent Speech & Sir R. Cross also a vy moderate one.

The Queen sends Mr. Chamberlain's Speech.

1082 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 523-4.)

DOWNING STREET. *July 25. 1884.*

Mr. Gladstone has the honour humbly to acknowledge Your Majesty's letter just received. Your Majesty will readily believe

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Chamberlain.

that he has neither the time nor eyesight to make himself acquainted by careful perusal with all the speeches of his colleagues, and from such comments as he had seen on the recent speech of Mr. Chamberlain he judged that it was in conformity with the assurances given to Your Majesty. He now does not lose a moment in saying that he will read this speech which Your Majesty has been good enough to forward with the utmost attention, and will have the honour subsequently to address to Your Majesty what he may have to say upon it. Will Your Majesty graciously forgive his observing in the meantime, that so far as he can judge, and certainly so far as his intention is concerned, the Franchise Bill could not rank among measures properly considered Radical, inasmuch as its main enactment is to extend a principle established by a Conservative Government in the towns and working beneficially there, to the counties, where the corresponding class of Householders are certainly more conservative than in the Towns.

Mr. Gladstone is convinced that the English rural voters, forming the majority of those to be enfranchised, may prove to be "conservative" even as matters stand, and would unquestionably have so voted but for the strange and (as it seems to him) suicidal resistance offered to the Bill of Enfranchisement.

### 1883 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

DOWNING STREET. 25th July. 1884.

. . . The Cabinet found it requisite to consider whether there should be a supplementary Army Estimate, and they were agreed that, apart from contingencies not yet in view, no such Estimate should at present be presented. In speaking of such contingencies Mr. Gladstone had in view the case of General Gordon on which there was further conversation. It appears to be beset with every kind of difficulty; and among the most prominent is the want of direct and sufficient evidence, while the indirect but rather concurrent accounts which have reached the country, do not encourage the idea of military manœuvres. On the other hand, that idea cannot well be finally dismissed until the direct intelligence, which Ministers are awaiting, shall have arrived.

1084 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*10, DOWNING STREET. *July 26. 1884.*

Mr. Gladstone . . . reports that with the first opportunity of daylight he has perused the report of Mr. Chamberlain's speech herewith returned.

Mr. Gladstone will briefly notice 1. the severe condemnation of the act of the House of Lords, 2. the sentence predicting that there will now be discussion everywhere embracing not only the past history and present action but the future prospects of the House of Lords, 3. the occasion of the Speech and 4. the construction generally put upon it.

To the first of these of course Mr. Gladstone from his point of view can take no exception : and he may remind Your Majesty that, when the House of Lords rejected the Reform Bill of 1831, Lord J. Russell did not scruple to describe their vote as " the whisper of a fraction " which he said could not prevail against the voice of a people. With the utmost respect for the memory of Lord Russell, Mr. Gladstone hopes that no such language will be used by any member of the present Cabinet.

With respect to the introduction of the " future prospects " of the House of Lords, this is certainly at variance with the general wish of the Cabinet, to which Mr. Chamberlain expressed his intention to conform ; and with the assurances on the subject, humbly conveyed to Your Majesty by Mr. Gladstone. It appears however to be an isolated expression, due probably to inadvertence, but Mr. Gladstone will, without naming Your Majesty's intervention (unless Your Majesty's pleasure be otherwise) point this out to Mr. Chamberlain, and feels sure that Mr. Chamberlain will agree with him that it should not be repeated.

With respect to the occasion of the speech, Mr. Gladstone thinks it had better have been avoided, and when asked for advice he seeks to confine any action of members of the Government to those places where they have a call to appear, as for example Lord Hartington today appears in Lancashire.

As respects the construction put upon the Speech, Mr. Gladstone finds that the public and competent observers do not appear to think it violent in its general tone. *The Times* newspaper declared it very powerful without, as far as Mr. Gladstone remembers any words of censure ; and the *Standard* described it as disap-



The Queen thinks *no* one can accuse her of anything but a desire to try & smoothen matters & promote harmony—tho' she cannot approve of some things wh<sup>h</sup> have been done, & fears they may increase difficulties in the future. It is always a source of regret to the Queen when she feels bound to disagree with them.

The Queen wishes to add that in speaking of Radical Measures the other day—she did *not* mean to imply that the new Franchise Bill was one—It was against a general Radical & downward tendency that she wished to warn—

The Queen quite shares Mr. Gladstone's difficulty in reading the newspapers & for the same reasons.

1086 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

OSBORNE 2 August, 1884.

The Queen wishes to give the garter to Prince George.<sup>1</sup>

1087 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

10, DOWNING STREET August 2. 1884

. . . The Cabinet agreed that it would be desirable, now that Parliament is going out of Session, to ask for a Vote of credit on account of the Soudan, amounting to £300<sup>m</sup>—which would firstly give the sanction of Parliament to their taking measures for the fulfilment of their engagements in regard to General Gordon, should the case arise, and would secondly enable the Departments to make certain preparations which may be requisite in relation to the season of the year in Egypt, and as a provision against being taken unawares.

1088 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

OSBORNE. August 6. 1884.

I am commanded by The Queen to call your attention to Mr. Chamberlain's last speech at Birmingham which Her Majesty thinks was an injudicious one for a Cabinet Minister to make.

1089 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to General Ponsonby*

August 7. 1884.

Upon receiving your letter I have read Mr. Chamberlain's Birmingham speech. There are phrases in it which I would not

<sup>1</sup> H M King George V.

have used. But I have no general jurisdiction over the speeches of my colleagues, and no right to prescribe their tone and colour.

When they offend against an assurance which with their authority I have given to the Queen, they then afford me a title to interfere, upon which I have been, I hope, not unduly slow to act.

In this case Mr. Chamberlain expressly disavows dealing with the future. He then, it is true, goes on to make a quotation which refers to it thus far, that it declares the Lords careless of it, and of their 'doom' in it.

But I do not think that this general and wholly undeveloped reference, in a poetical quotation which Mr. Chamberlain would say has more in it of figure than of fact, would afford any ground broad enough for me to take. At the same time, I would not have quoted the lines.

I may perhaps observe that the tone of public meetings has been more decisively in the sense of change in the House of Lords itself than I have either expected or desired. This does not affect the action of the Cabinet, but very much limits its power.

1090

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

OSBORNE. Aug. 8. 1884.

. . . The Queen much regrets to see by Mr. Gladstone's letter to Sir H. Ponsonby that he is not inclined to carry out his promise to the Queen to keep his unruly Colleague<sup>1</sup> in order.—He is a most dangerous man.

1091 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

10, DOWNING STREET. August 9. 1884.

Mr. Gladstone presents his humble duty to Your Majesty, has the honour to acknowledge Your Majesty's letter of yesterday<sup>d</sup>

In this letter Your Majesty is pleased to express regret that Mr. Gladstone is "not inclined to carry out his promise to the Queen to keep his unruly colleague in order."

Mr. Gladstone does not think that Your Majesty intended these words to receive a literal interpretation.

Mr. Gladstone humbly reminds Your Majesty that he has stated his opinion adversely to Mr. Chamberlain's modes of

<sup>1</sup> Mr Chamberlain

expression ; but likewise his belief that they do not constitute infractions of his engagement : and also that Mr. Chamberlain is abstaining from recommending or discussing the critical changes in the House of Lords, at a juncture when this subject has apparently become the favourite, and for most men inevitable topic, of every Liberal meeting in the country.

1092

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 526-7.)

OSBORNE. Aug. 10. 1884.

The Queen thanks Mr. Gladstone for his letter & the Draft of the Speech. The latter she thinks unobjectionable & not too long w<sup>h</sup> she always considers an advantage.

What the Queen meant to convey to Mr. Gladstone was her regret—that in his letter to Sir Henry Ponsonby he seemed rather to withdraw from his first promise.

In his letter on the 25th July he said it “ was not practicable to impose on *all* Members of the Administration the same degree of restraint w<sup>h</sup> he hoped *the Cabinet* w<sup>ld</sup> endure.” Immediately after this Mr. Chamberlain made that Speech w<sup>h</sup> the Queen thought v<sup>y</sup> objectionable & in Mr. Gladstone’s letter of the 26<sup>th</sup>, he says after having perused it : “ The remarks on the future prospects of the H. of L<sup>ds</sup> are certainly *at variance with* the general wish of the Cabinet & with w<sup>h</sup> Mr. Chamberlain concurred, & with the assurances made to the Queen & that he w<sup>ld</sup> point this out to Mr. Chamberlain, who, he felt sure w<sup>ld</sup> at once agree it sh<sup>ld</sup> *not be repeated.*”

He sent 2 days after Mr. Chamberlain’s “ straightforward letter ” as Mr. Gladstone termed & yet not a week after—Mr. Ch : *does repeat it*—& she regrets to see Mr. Gladstone’s answer to Sir Henry on his attention being drawn to it, in w<sup>h</sup> he blames the quotations but says : “ But I have *no general jurisdiction* over the Speeches of *my colleagues* & no *right to prescribe their tone & colour.*”

The Queen thinks & maintains that the Prime Minister *has & ought to have* that power—& that former Prime Ministers *did* exercise it. The H<sup>se</sup> of Lords may be blamed & attacked but the more they *are*—the *more* determined they will become, & as it is the Queen’s anxious object to *prevent* unnecessary violence & antagonism w<sup>h</sup> may be excited into most unjust & dangerous



1097 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

DALMENY. August 29. 1884.

. . . He can assure Your Majesty that he has been all along most deeply impressed with the weight of the task which is now before him, and of which he must acquit himself, well or ill, within the next few days. . . .

It has been seriously aggravated by some leaders of the Opposition, who have made bold to contend that the House of Peers is a representative assembly. This renders it inevitable to examine in some degree how far the legislative action of the House has represented the true and permanent sentiment of the nation. While he cannot avoid the subject thus opened, he hopes to deal with it mildly, and to adhere with steadiness to the line which he has indicated with respect to organic change in the House of Lords. . . .

Upon the whole Mr. Gladstone, having it for his aim to convey a clear, strong and safe impression, is more apprehensive of failure through an over-anxiety which tends to bewilder the mind, than through a low estimate of the duty he has to perform.

1098 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 534.)

OSBORNE. August 31. 1884.

The Queen has read your abbreviated Memorandum which she likes very much.

And has desired me to make a shorter abstract of your arguments without any reference to your name, that she may quote from if necessary.

1099 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*(Partly printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 534)*Private.*OSBORNE. ~~September 1.~~ 1884.

When the Queen again spoke to me upon the possible crisis which you warned her might arise if the Franchise Bill did not pass through the House of Lords in the Autumn, Her Majesty seemed inclined to take some steps for ascertaining the opinions of the leaders of the Opposition with a view to inducing them to modify their programme. But in discussing this point The Queen

asked me if the Government would make any concession and if so of what nature. . . .

1100

*General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone**Private.*BALMORAL. *September 12. 1884.*

The Duke of Richmond is coming here tomorrow.

It seems to be expected that he will propose that a clause should be introduced into the Franchise Bill forbidding its coming into operation till the Distribution Bill has passed—or till 1886. . . .

I do not know upon what grounds it is expected the Duke will make this suggestion.

I should doubt very much his making any direct proposal without consulting his colleagues.

But I imagine that if he makes this or any other possible suggestion The Queen will wish to see you on Monday for the purpose of asking your advice upon it. Possibly this might be done on your way from Mai to the train.

1101

*General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*BALMORAL. *Sept. 14. 1884.*

Would the following proposal be such as would form the basis of an understanding with the Opposition?

To insert in the Franchise Bill a clause which would fix the date at which it should come into operation, to be the same date at which the Redistribution Bill took effect—so as to secure both Bills passing at the same time. This might be done by naming the date for the commencement of the Franchise Bill in the Redistribution Bill.

1102 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to General Ponsonby*HADDO HOUSE. *15th Sept. 1884.*

I told you in good faith that I hoped to remain silent, or all but silent, today, and for the present. But the unbounded enthusiasm all along the line made it impossible for me literally to act upon this intention—which I regret in the interest of my chest and otherwise. I moved however (about five or six times) upon the lines of brevity and commonplace.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This view was not accepted by the Queen, who wrote strongly of "his constant speeches at every station, without which the country would not be excited . . . The Queen is utterly disgusted with his stump oratory—so unworthy of his position—almost under her very nose." (*Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 539)

1103 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone**Private.*BALMORAL. *September 22. 1884.*

Would you acquiesce in the following proposal ?

When the Franchise Bill reaches the House of Lords—that they should read it a second time and then put it down for Committee—passing the following Resolution. “That Her Majesty’s Government having undertaken to introduce and use their best endeavors to pass a Redistribution Bill the House will go into Committee on this (Franchise) Bill as soon as the Redistribution Bill comes up to this House.”

The Government can then introduce the Redistribution Bill in the Autumn Session or in an adjournment after Christmas.

My private impression being that you will not like this proposal, here is another

“To provide in the Franchise Bill that it shall come into effect on the 1st January 1886 unless the Redistribution Bill is sooner passed.”

I know you see some objection to this. but I hope nevertheless that the suggestion may form the basis of an agreement.

I think you said that Sir S. Northcote objected to Albert Grey’s amendment which was somewhat similar to the above. Perhaps he won’t do so now. I am not in a position to say he would take this—but if you gave me encouragement—without mentioning your name or other names at this stage of the proceedings, I might ascertain more decidedly the opinion of the Tory chiefs.

I have thought it best not to mention The Queen’s name in my letter to you till the way is a little clearer—but of course she is cognizant of all my correspondence on this subject and said she earnestly hoped you would see some means of accepting one of the proposals.

1104 *(Copy) Mr. Gladstone to General Ponsonby*

(Partly printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 542-4.)

*Private.*DALMENY PARK. *September 25. 1884.*

I cannot answer your letter briefly, and yet I fear it will be answered insufficiently, for it opens many considerations.

Let me begin by making these preliminary remarks.

That I write at the first moment, and for myself alone.

That I will cheerfully summon the Cabinet for the consideration of any proposal on which the Queen may have any desire that they should be consulted.

That the question what arrangement the Government can adopt and become responsible for is not precisely the same with the question what they might accept in a Parliamentary crisis, though I cannot define the amount of difference between them, which might according to circumstances be considerable or insignificant or none at all.

Now to proceed.

In regard to your first proposition, it would I think totally break up and render unavailable, the large and thoroughly united power, which we at present possess for advancing our measure. The second reading, under the circumstances, is a comparatively small matter. In 1870, Mr. Disraeli assented to the second reading of our Irish Land Bill, as he said it meant no more than that some change was necessary. In 1832 the Reform Bill was read a second time, in the Lords, and was also carried into Committee when a vote forthwith disabled it, and the Crisis of that year at once ensued. While the thing offered is thus small, the thing asked is great, for it is that one shall leave the Franchise Bill exposed for so many months, at the least to all the general chances of politics.

I must own my decided opinion that no good is done, but rather the reverse, in the actual state of affairs by offers such as this.

The case is somewhat different as regards the second proposal, but I cannot say it is greatly more hopeful, because the project in all likelihood would be so terribly damaged in argument on its merits, that I fear it would have the same effect as the first in breaking up the Liberal force, which of course we cannot think of. But let us look at particulars. . . .

7. But I must own that I think it dangerous to tamper with the feelings and convictions of the millions, whose fitness has been pronounced unconditionally by a very large majority of the House of Commons, as we should tamper with it by any postponement of these admissions to the actual franchise, unless it were recommended by some practical advantage. Any such advantage we have been unable to discover. . . .

9. Finally I must point out that if the House of Lords were to

invent a clause of this description, and if the Government were (which I do not say they would or would not) to assent under impulsion, nothing could more distinctly tend to root in the popular mind the desire for that organic change in the House of Lords, which for one, I have been doing all in my power to avert.

I do not assume that persons taking another view might not discover recommendations of this project which I have been unable to discern. But the list of objections and difficulties which I have given seems to me formidable.

I should be sorry however that this letter should be negative only. I will try to make it indicative. . . .

I do not however desire to view the matter in the light of what they are entitled to ask, but of what it is practicable for us to concede, without putting to hazard the whole of a great undertaking, and betraying our trust.

It has always appeared to me plain, that if the Opposition do really and unconditionally desire the settlement of the whole question in the present Parliament, their course plainly is to demand from us clearer specifications and more binding pledges in regard to the *principles* of Redistribution.

*What in this respect do they want?* I have honestly tried to learn and have totally failed. Does not Lord Salisbury seem even to fondle a little the numerical principle, which we have rather eschewed, and sought also to attract them by eschewing?

This is the first question—why should they not reply? It would then appear whether we were tolerably agreed. I admit there are some things which they are justified in anxiously striving to secure. But these things present in my eyes no insurmountable difficulty. . . .

When we know what the Opposition want and we can agree to, why should we not then consider the best form of receiving it.

I have now, I think, said enough to show that my humour is not one of negation. I know that I move, in every step of a correspondence like this, with considerable risks. But it is pre-eminently my duty to look at both sides of the question: and I have here been looking at one of them. I must now say a word on the other. Since I saw you last, I have had pretty large means of judgment as to the popular sense, and I could give you many details of

evidence. The upshot is, that, in my firm conviction, the question really (I do not now say immediately) depending is, not whether the enlarged Representation of the people shall be settled, but whether we can exclude from the arena of political conflict the organic reformation of the House of Lords. I answer for nothing, after the next rejection. Dissolution thereupon or no Dissolution, makes I think only this difference ; that the first of these alternatives precipitates the issue, for it would be a Dissolution on the Reform of both Houses, and yet more of the Lords than of the Commons.

1105

*General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

BALMORAL. September 27. 1884.

. . . On reading your letter The Queen remarked that you were over anxious for the susceptibilities of the Liberal party as she considers this question of a national and not party importance.

You must be glad to have rest after your most successful visit to the North.

1106

*General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

BALMORAL. October 1. 1884.

. . . I had no means of telling you what the opinion of the Opposition was. Without mentioning your name The Queen had already briefly repeated to some of that party the essence of your Memorandum of last August—whether they were moved by it or not I cannot say.

My communication with the Opposition chief naturally takes time as Her Majesty does not communicate direct with Lord Salisbury and any of the others must consult him before giving a definite answer.

The objection you explain to me—to the proposal I made—is a serious one. . . .

1107 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

October 6. 1884.

. . . Lord Northbrook's<sup>1</sup> suggestion respecting a possible expedition by General Gordon to the Southward was considered

<sup>1</sup> First Lord of the Admiralty.

and, as Lord Granville will have informed Your Majesty by telegraph, the Cabinet could not advise that any initiative should be taken with reference to such a plan. . . .

1108 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

October 8. 1884.

. . . Mr. Gladstone referred to the communications with which he has been favoured by Your Majesty on the subject of the Franchise, and found that the language he has held was, taken generally, in accordance with the views of his colleagues. The Cabinet consider the tone of the Opposition leaders to be most unfavourable to any accommodation—but they are not on that account indisposed to any step of that nature which may forward the passing of the Franchise Bill, and avert the advent of wider discussions. Some rumours are abroad of the Irish (so called) Nationalists, but this contingency, if it should arise, will not affect the views of Your Majesty's advisers, and may possibly strengthen their hand.

The Cabinet perused the draft Instructions to Lord Wolseley,<sup>1</sup> which have come home from Egypt, and made one or two amendments ; leaving out all reference to Zebehr.

1109 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[*Telegram*]

9th October. 1884.

I must express my extreme surprise and regret after what you repeatedly promised me in July at Mr. Chamberlain's Speech. I am trying what I can do to help in bringing about a compromise but it is impossible to expect success if a Cabinet Minister holds such language.

1110 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

DOWNING STREET. 9th October. 1884.

. . . If Your Majesty will have the goodness to point to the particular parts of Mr. Chamberlain's lengthened address to which it refers, Mr. Gladstone will immediately give them his closest attention.

He read the entire speech in *The Times*, but gave particular heed to the portion of it which referred to the possibility of a



<sup>1</sup> Commanding the Sudan Expedition.

conciliatory arrangement. He had written to Mr. Chamberlain on this vital point of the case which seems to him almost to throw all others into the shade. He had earnestly requested his colleague to observe on this head a careful moderation. And as he cannot dissemble with Your Majesty on any matter, least of all on one of this importance, he is bound to say that he thinks Mr. Chamberlain fully complied with his request. Moreover, as a Cabinet was held yesterday and this matter was discussed, Mr. Gladstone had means of judging of the impression of his colleagues, and he found that they corresponded with his own.

Mr. Gladstone feels persuaded that the really formidable and discouraging circumstances of the case are to be found in the recent speeches of the leading Tories among which he will mention those of Lord Salisbury, Lord Harrowby, and Sir M. H. Beach. They all, he thinks, declare plainly that Franchise and Redistribution must be handled together, and Sir M. H. Beach, not satisfied with this, boasts that the air is full of rumours of compromise, but that they all proceed from the Liberal Camp (which is true) and that this points to Liberal surrender. Mr. Gladstone has exerted himself, as well as he could, to keep the question of organic change in the House of Lords out of the fray, and these gentlemen are apparently labouring to bring it in.

The *Pall Mall Gazette* treats the Speech of Mr. Chamberlain as generally equivalent to that of Lord Hartington, but as even more conciliatory.

1111

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

10th October. 1884.

The violence of some speeches made by members of Government interpose serious difficulties in way of my effecting any agreement but if Ld. Hartington's speech can be taken as a basis, I would suggest that he should be empowered to communicate with Ld. Salisbury, who is in no way opposed to some compromise being arranged.

1112

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

BALMORAL CASTLE. Oct. 11. 1884.

. . . Although the strong expressions used by Ministers in their recent Speeches has made the task of conciliation under-



taken by the Queen, a *most* difficult one, she is *so much* impressed with the importance of the issue at stake that she has persevered in her endeavours and has obtained from the Leaders of the Opposition an expression of their readiness to negotiate on the basis of Lord Hartington's Speech at Hanley.—

In the hope that this *may* lead to a Compromise, the Queen has suggested that Lord Hartington may enter into communication with Lord Salisbury & she trusts from Mr. Gladstone's Telegram received this morning that he will empower Lord Hartington to discuss the possibility of an agreement with Lord Salisbury.

### 1113 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 550.)

HAWARDEN CASTLE. Oct. 13. 1884.

Mr. Gladstone with his humble duty offers his grateful thanks to Your Majesty for all the well-timed efforts Your Majesty has graciously made to bring about an accommodation on the question of Parliamentary representation, and thus to avert a great public mischief and a fierce controversy.

Mr. Gladstone cannot feel sanguine as to obtaining any concession from the Leaders, but he is very glad that Lord Hartington should try, as Lord Salisbury appears to be of opinion that the present difficulties would have been avoided had the chief management of affairs been in the hands of Lord Hartington. . . .

### 1114 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[*Telegram*]

BALMORAL. 20th Oct. 1884.

Am writing about your box of submissions but to save time approve Mr. Trevelyan's appointment.<sup>1</sup> But much regret removal of Mr. Dodson<sup>2</sup> whom I much like and respect, and of which I had no idea.

### 1115 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

BALMORAL CASTLE. Oct. 20. 1884.

. . . She has already, as ~~soon as~~ his name was submitted, approved of Mr. C. Bannerman<sup>3</sup> to succeed Mr. Trevelyan whose

<sup>1</sup> Mr. G. O. Trevelyan became Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster with a seat in the Cabinet on his retirement from the Irish Office on grounds of health.

<sup>2</sup> Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.

<sup>3</sup> Mr. H. Campbell-Bannerman became Chief Secretary.

health Mr. Gladstone already 6 weeks ago, mentioned as much affected, tho' he never mentioned he was going to retire or even wrote a *word* to the Queen to that effect.—It was *only* when Lord Spencer<sup>1</sup> came here that he told the Queen of it ; but he—also, *never* breathed a word of Mr. Dodson's retirement.

The Queen must say that she is greatly astonished & shocked at the way in w<sup>h</sup> a Cabinet Minister & one whom she liked & respected & who held the Office of Chancellor of her *own* Duchy of Lancaster—has been, as it were, *dismissed without one single* word being mentioned to her by the Prime Minister. The Queen doubts such a proceeding ever having taken place & considering *how* anxious Mr. Gladstone has *always* shown himself—to prevent any appointment being known before the Queen's consent had been obtained, she cannot understand his not consulting her before any steps were taken to make this change & feels sure it must be an oversight.

The Queen trusts it may not occur again.—She hesitates to approve Mr. Trevelyan's Appt. & especially his admission *to the Cabinet*, as she knew him to be *formerly* a v<sup>y</sup> advanced Radical.

She is assured however that his experience in Ireland has moderated him, & she therefore consents to his Appointment . . .

The Queen quite approves of the proposal with respect to the Speech from the Throne which seems v<sup>y</sup> judicious.

#### 1116 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

BALMORAL. 21 October. 1884.

Have received your letter with full account of Mr. T[revelyan] which I consider quite satisfactory.

#### 1117 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 553.)

BALMORAL. Oct. 22. 1884.

The Queen telegraphed to Mr. Gladstone her approval of Mr. Trevelyan's Appt. & further that she considered his Explanation & account of Mr. Trevelyan as *quite satisfactory*.—

The Queen will tak<sup>e</sup> an early opportunity of making Mr. Trevelyan's acquaintance. She concludes that th<sup>e</sup> Irish will be v<sup>y</sup> troublesome & that the Debate on the Address<sup>e</sup> will again be prolonged.—

<sup>1</sup> Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland.

The Queen must again call Mr. Gladstone's attention to Mr. Chamberlain's Speeches. He *approves* of the *disgraceful* riot<sup>1</sup> at Birmingham !!

If a Cabinet Minister makes use of such language & sets the Prime Minister's Injunctions at defiance—he ought *not* to *remain* in the *Cabinet*. His language if *not* disavowed, justifies the *worst apprehensions* of the Opposition.

1118 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 555.)

[Telegram]

23rd Oct. 1884.

Your Majesty's letter of yesterday. Concurring in Your Majesty's regret and disapprobation of language used, Mr. Gladstone on becoming acquainted with it last Tuesday at once adopted measures which he hopes will have a good result. . . .

1119 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 557.)

10, DOWNING STREET. 25 Oct. 1884.

. . . Your Majesty may have seen the letter published by Mr. Chamberlain in reply to a gentleman who mentioned the construction put upon his speech as it regarded violence. That letter does not come up to Mr. Gladstone's expectations and desires.

In approaching Mr. Chamberlain on the subject, he made use of the good offices of Sir Charles Dilke, whose views of the matter appeared to him perfectly just and sound. And Sir C. Dilke like Mr. Gladstone expected a letter in terms which he roughly sketched. No substantive result was attained by the questions put to or concerning Mr. Chamberlain last night, and an unfortunate criticism by Sir Stafford Northcote gave Mr. Chamberlain an opportunity of a successful retort and thereby a great advantage. Mr. Chamberlain expressed his disapproval of violence, but reserved the occurrence at Birmingham for discussion.

It is not unlikely that the subject may again be opened. For the present, Mr. Gladstone conceives it to be most prudent for him to rest upon the very strong declaration he made on behalf

<sup>1</sup> A Conservative demonstration in Aston Park, ended in disorder, October 13, 1884.

of the Government last Thursday evening, which was characterised by a member of the Opposition as "a terrible rebuke to the President of the Board of Trade."

1120 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

(Partly printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 558.)

*Confidential.*

BALMORAL CASTLE. Oct. 27. 1884.

The Queen thanks Mr. Gladstone for his letter rec<sup>d</sup> yesterday afternoon. She is glad to perceive that Mr. Gladstone disapproves Mr. Chamberlain's most dangerous & offensive language. . . .

It is, the Queen thinks absolutely necessary for the honour of the Govt. that Mr. Gladstone sh<sup>d</sup> take a firm stand & separate his name from Mr. Chamberlain—with wh<sup>h</sup> it is too often wrongly no doubt—connected. Mr. Chamberlain *must* restrain his language—or *not* remain in the Cabinet. In any other Cabinet such freedom of language has not been tolerated.

1121 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[*Telegram*]

30th October. 1884.

Am more hopeful that by mutual forbearance and a sensible true and loyal patriotism I may yet be able to bring the two sides to an understanding. It is of vital importance not a word should be said when you bring in the Franchise Bill which could in the slightest degree be misconstrued as it might seriously damage prospects of reconciliation.

1122 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

ST. JAMES PALACE. October 30. 1884.

I am commanded by The Queen to make the following suggestion in the hopes that it may lead to an agreement viz: that The House of Lords should read the Franchise Bill a second time then wait till the Redistribution Bill reaches them. That thereon the Conservatives should not oppose the Government putting down the Franchise Bill for all its subsequent stages before the Redistribution Bill, leaving of course the House free to do what it pleases on those stages.

1123 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

10, DOWNING STREET. 30th October. 1884.

Mr. Gladstone . . . acknowledges Your Majesty's gracious communication through Sir H. Ponsonby, inquiring whether

an arrangement could be made, under which the Lords should read the Franchise Bill a second time, and thus suspend proceedings until the Seats (for Redistribution) Bill should reach them.

There will be a Cabinet, in all likelihood, almost immediately, and Mr. Gladstone will not fail to submit the proposal.

Mr. Gladstone . . . will be careful in the debate on the 2nd Reading of the Franchise Bill to say nothing which can be likely to intercept the possible effect of Your Majesty's wise and gracious endeavours.

1124

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 564.)

BALMORAL CASTLE. October 31. 1884.

. . . She was very favourably impressed with Mr. Trevelyan who seemed to her very moderate & conciliatory in his views, & extremely agreeable to speak to on all subjects.

The Queen thinks that it would be a means of arriving at some understanding if the *Leaders of the Parties* in *both Houses* could exchange their views *personally*.—

The Duke of Argyll or any other person unconnected for the present with the Government or the Opposition might be employed in bringing about a Meeting & in assisting to solve difficulties.

The Queen thinks the Govt. should in any project forming the basis of Resolutions on Redistribution to be proposed to the House, distinctly define their plans at such a personal conference. The Queen believes that were assurance given that the Redistribution wld not be wholly inimical to the prospects of the Conservative Party their concurrence might be obtained.

The Queen feels most strongly that it is of the *utmost importance* that in this serious crisis such means even if unusual, should be tried, & knowing how fully Mr. Gladstone recognises the great danger that might arise by prolonging the conflict—the Queen *earnestly* trusts that he will avail himself of such means to obviate it.

As the Queen has no time to write to Lord Granville herself she wld ask Mr. Gladstone to show him this letter.

1125 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 565.)

10, DOWNING STREET. 31 October. 1884.

Mr. Gladstone . . . reports that he this day made known to his Colleagues in Cabinet the suggestion for a possible settlement of the question of Parliamentary Representation, which he had the honour to receive yesterday through Sir H. Ponsonby. His colleagues agree with him in the opinion that the offer to concede the second Reading of the Franchise Bill alone would make no substantial difference in the situation, and they do not see in the suggestion any hopeful means for an adjustment.

Mr. Trevelyan reported to the Cabinet Your Majesty's gracious assurance to him of an unwearied anxiety for the settlement of this great question, which the Cabinet received most gratefully, and Your Majesty's indisposition to a Dissolution of Parliament under the present circumstances which they conceive to be prompted by a spirit of wisdom.

Mr. Gladstone mentioned a variety of indications from different quarters all tending to show that there is probably a growing anxiety among those of the Opposition for some accommodation: and Lord Hartington mentioned an interview which, with Mr. Gladstone's concurrence, he had held with Sir M. H. Beach. At that interview, which was of the most confidential character, and entirely without prejudice, Sir M. Beach stated with perfect frankness and fulness his views of Redistribution, which he was understood to share with other leading men of his party, but who or how many they were did not clearly appear. He gave the outline of a very large plan, involving more extensive changes than Mr. Gladstone would have thought necessary or desirable. At the same time he is sensible of the vast importance of a settlement, and he believes and hopes that his colleagues will keep their minds open to what may be the exigencies of the time, without any unduly strict prepossessions as to particulars. In this he feels rather confident of Your Majesty's approval. . . .

1126 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

HOUSE OF COMMONS. Oct. 31. 1884.

Mr. Gladstone humbly reports to Your Majesty that this evening has been occupied by an unprofitable discussion of the distress

of the Country, which has seemed to have, on the part of the Tory members, for its real aim, to bring about a return to the condemned system of Protection. . . .

1127 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 566.)

10, DOWNING STREET. 1 Nov. 1884.

Mr. Gladstone . . . thinks there is nothing in the proceedings of yesterday's Cabinet which can in any way conflict with Your Majesty's suggestion and desire, but the contrary. The important matter of exchanging views had been initiated by Sir M. Beach and taken up by Lord Hartington, who will remain in constant communication with his colleagues and who appears to be better fitted to carry forward these proceedings at their present stage than any other person; enjoying full confidence on one side, and probably more on the other side, than any other minister would enjoy.

The next step, as it appears to Mr. Gladstone, will evidently be for Lord Hartington to satisfy himself if possible how far Sir M. Beach is on this important occasion speaking for the recognised leaders of his party. In this view Lord Hartington concurs and he will shape his conversation accordingly. Perhaps Sir M. Beach may address to him reciprocal inquiries, which he will be able to meet.

Should these appear to be a sufficiently solid basis for a continuance of the conversations, the matter must be considered afresh. But if Sir M. Beach appears to be sufficiently authorised, then, Mr. Gladstone humbly submits to Your Majesty, the subject appears to be in good train.

1128

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[*Telegram*]

BALMORAL. Nov. 2. 1884.

Your letters received yesterday afternoon and this evening have caused me the greatest satisfaction for I now trust and hope that all my anxious endeavours to bring about a solution of this difficult crisis will not be in vain.

1129

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

4th November. 1884.

Has Lord Hartington ascertained whether Sir M. Beach is acting under authority of leaders? Sir S. Northcote answers that he and Lord Salisbury are ready to meet any members of the Government. Expect to hear from latter tomorrow.

1130

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*(Partly printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 568-9.)

BALMORAL CASTLE Nov. 10. 1884.

The Queen would wish before she writes to Mr. Gladstone on any other subject to express her sincere regret at the death of Mr. Fawcett.<sup>1</sup> He was an able, & a very honest man, & tho' his views were very advanced he was thoroughly conscientious & served his Sovereign & Country ably. He bore his g<sup>t</sup> misfortune with great courage & patience.

The Queen thanks Mr. Gladstone for his last very interesting Letters—relative to the proceedings in Parliament on the Franchise Bill—& of the Cabinet with reference to the Redistribution Bill—& the communications between Lord Hartington & Sir J. H. Beach.

She thinks these communications in themselves are of great importance & must tend to soften & allay the asperities w<sup>h</sup> of late both sides had indulged in as well as to bring people together. The Queen thinks the tone of the Speeches satisfactory & hopeful. She has of course not time [to] read them all—but she did—Sir R. Cross's & Sir C. Dilke's & was pleased with them.

The Queen expects to be at Windsor D.V. on the 20th & w<sup>ld</sup> be glad to see Mr. Gladstone soon after.

She trusts that it may be possible to modify the too Radical nature of Sir M. H. Beach's proposals—tho' she cannot think that he can intend them to have that tendency.

1131

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

12th Nov. 1884.

Are the Lord Hartington-Beach negotiations still proceeding? And is Beach acting in concert with Lord Salisbury's approval?

<sup>1</sup> The blind Postmaster-General.



Cabinet proposed some days ago to ask him to bring Sir S. Northcote or Lord Salisbury. Has he responded ? I am most anxious for a settlement.

1132 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 569-71.)

10, DOWNING STREET. 12 November. 1884.

Mr. Gladstone with his humble duty reminds Your Majesty that, when Your Majesty was pleased at a recent date graciously to recommend private communication between the leaders of the Government and the Opposition with regard to the Franchise and Redistribution, he replied by apprising Your Majesty that such an exchange of views as was contemplated had been initiated by Sir M. Beach and taken up by Lord Hartington, who appeared to be best qualified to carry forward the proceedings at the stage they had then reached.

Shortly afterwards Lord Carlingford<sup>1</sup> signified to Mr. Gladstone by Your Majesty's command that Lord Salisbury had declared his readiness "to consult with anyone with whom Your Majesty wishes him to consult, and to do all that in him lies to bring the controversy speedily to a just and honourable issue."

Hereupon Mr. Gladstone looked forward hopefully to the time when the course of conversations between Lord Hartington and Sir M. H. Beach might afford a solid basis for more developed and formal proceedings of the nature of those indicated by Lord Salisbury.

The hopefulness of this prospect was seriously affected by the debate of last evening, to his report of which Mr. Gladstone humbly refers : and in conjunction therewith, Sir M. H. Beach (to whom Mr. Gladstone is far from attaching any blame) acquainted Lord Hartington during the sitting of the House that he saw no advantage in the continuance of their communications. Mr. Gladstone is not citing words, but only relating their substance.

It can no longer be upon a basis already laid that any communication can now be had with Lord Salisbury. Yet Mr. Gladstone feels that the expression of Your Majesty's desire is still before him : and, though he cannot look for the aid which he had trusted that prior communication might afford, he desires humbly to express his willingness to meet Your Majesty's views for a

<sup>1</sup> Lord President of the Council

direct communication, should Your Majesty still deem it expedient, between the leaders of the Opposition.

Mr. Gladstone also desires humbly to assure Your Majesty, quite apart from the main purpose of this letter, that, notwithstanding the authoritative declaration of Lord J. Manners in the House of Commons, he will with his colleagues continue to study any suggestion or expedient which may seem likely to release the country from the risks of what appears to be the approaching crisis.

1133 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

13th Nov. 1884.

I have received your letter of yesterday by the afternoon's post with much satisfaction. I will write and contrive to do all I can to bring about peaceful and amicable solution impending; and rely on you and others to assist me.

1134 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 571.)

10, DOWNING STREET. Nov. 14. 1884.

Mr. Gladstone transmits to Your Majesty with his humble duty, and with very deep regret, the enclosed copies of documents dated yesterday and today.<sup>1</sup>

1135 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

BALMORAL CASTLE. Nov. 15. 1884.

. . . The Queen thanks Mr. Gladstone for his frequent communications by letter & Telegram (Cypher) on the very important subject of the Reform Measures.

The very conflicting views & the ups & downs of this very difficult & anxious crisis are very bewildering—but the Queen cannot give up hope of an amicable agreement being with patience & perseverance arrived at. The Country expects it.

1136 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 572-3)

November 15. 1884.

Mr. Gladstone reports to Your Majesty with his humble duty that he this day stated to the Cabinet not the contents of the

<sup>1</sup> The enclosed correspondence between Mr. Gladstone and Sir S. Northcote is printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria* (2), III, 571-2.

documents he had yesterday the honour of forwarding to Your Majesty, nor the name of any person in connection with them, but the conclusion which they conveyed to his mind that, so far as leaders of the Tory party were concerned, the door was now closed against accommodation with the House of Lords. He ought perhaps to observe in passing that, after obtaining a distinct declaration from Sir Stafford Northcote on his own behalf and that of Lord Salisbury, he felt himself precluded by honour from attempting to establish any separate communication with their immediate friends. This being so the question remained whether there should be a public declaration of Lord Granville in the House of Lords, and by Mr. Gladstone in the House of Commons, setting forth the basis upon which Your Majesty's advisers are prepared to proceed with respect to the two measures.

The Cabinet approved of this plan, and agreed upon the accompanying papers which, apart from any prefatory or accompanying remarks, they think should be delivered textually in both Houses of Parliament on Monday. Some intimation that it is to be made will probably appear in the morning journals of that day, but the subject matter will remain secret until the appointed time.

Your Majesty's Ministers are not without the hope that this declaration may produce an effect upon Peers of moderate opinions as well as in a wider circle. . . .

1137

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 574.)

[Telegram]

17th November. 1884.

I am very sorry to learn result of your communications with Sir S. Northcote, as nothing further can be expected in that direction. I think your proposed declaration is the best course to pursue. Trust any accompanying remarks may be most conciliatory.

1138 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 579-80.)

10, DOWNING STREET. 19th November. 1884.

Mr. Gladstone reports to Your Majesty with his humble duty that Lord Granville and he have had a conversation of an hour's

length with Lord Salisbury and Sir S. Northcote, on the subject of the contemplated Seats Bill. This conversation was entirely friendly in its tone.

The first question was this: how far and in what terms the Ministry was to be bound to the prosecution of the Seats Bill in the two Houses. This was settled in terms entirely satisfactory to both parties.

It was agreed that the conversations on the provisions of the Seats Bill should be absolutely secret: subject to the power asked by Lord Salisbury of communicating with a very few persons in strict confidence, also that every effort should be used to expedite them. It was likewise understood that what was said on the respective sides was said, under the usual responsibility, and so far as might be, for the respective parties in the two Houses.

Several main points of the question were discussed generally; a full statement of the heads of the Bill now prepared was read by Mr. Gladstone; and a copy of the same was placed, as a secret document, in the hands of Lord Salisbury and Sir S. Northcote.

It was agreed to meet again on Saturday at twelve: and agreed that Lord Hartington and Sir C. Dilke, who are well acquainted with particulars, should then attend.

It is too early to give an opinion as to the prospects of accord, but neither Lord Granville nor Mr. Gladstone saw any cause to despair of it, while some good may have been done even by the attempt at it through friendly intercourse.

1139

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 581-2.)

WINDSOR CASTLE. Nov. 21. 1884.

The Queen thanks Mr. Gladstone vy much for his vy interesting & she must add vy satisfactory reports—on his Meetings with Lord Salisbury & (she supposes) Sir S.<sup>r</sup> Northcote? The conciliatory tone Mr. Gladstone speaks of—she hears is entirely corroborated by Lord Salisbury with respect to Mr. Gladstone.

The Queen feels sure that with such a disposition on both sides, & with such a sincere desire to secure a good & desirable measure of Redistribution for the British Empire—they will succeed.—

These last 2 months but especially the last few weeks have been most trying & anxious for the Queen, but the consciousness that she has been able to assist in bringing about this promising state of things amply repays her for all she has gone through. The Queen must also thank Mr. Gladstone for his Parliamentary reports.—She is very glad to perceive how reserved he was in his Statements & answers.

1140 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

[*Telegram*]

Nov. 26. 1884.

Meeting this afternoon we shall probably close tomorrow no change for the worse.

1141 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

[*Telegram*]

27th November. 1884.

Points of substance all settled this afternoon. Only form remains. Humbly congratulate.

1142

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[*Telegram*]

27th November. 1884.

I gladly and thankfully return your telegram. To be able to be of use is all I care to live for now.

1143 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

10, DOWNING STREET. Nov. 27. 1884.

Referring to his ciphered telegram of this afternoon, Mr. Gladstone humbly reports to Your Majesty that the delicate and novel communications between certain members of the Cabinet and the leaders of the Opposition in the two Houses have been brought to a happy termination.

Mr. Gladstone's first duty (and he will not go beyond in writing these few lines) is to tender his grateful thanks to Your Majesty for that wise, gracious, and steady exercise of influence on Your Majesty's part which has so powerfully contributed to bring about this accommodation, and to avert a serious crisis of affairs.

Much remains to be said and thought of but Mr. Gladstone will not further detain Your Majesty than by saying that his cordial

acknowledgments are due to Lord Salisbury and to Sir S. Northcote for the manner in which they have conducted these difficult communications.

1144 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to General Ponsonby*

*Private.*

1st December. 1884.

In writing to acknowledge the important aid so "timeously" given by the Queen, I thought that my thanks to her should stand alone. But, having allowed now a decent interval, I fulfil my intention and desire to record my sense of the tact discernment and constancy with which you have promoted the attainment of an accord, and thus made an important contribution to political peace where its preservation was of so much importance.

1145 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. Dec. 1. 1884.

The Queen wishes now to thank Mr. Gladstone for his kind letter rec<sup>d</sup> on Friday in which he expresses his thanks to her for the assistance she gave in facilitating the compromise between the Govt. & the Leaders of the Opposition which has been so satisfactorily effected.—

Lord Salisbury & Sir S. Northcote spoke in high terms of Mr. Gladstone's vy conciliatory tone & manner—which she knows was reciprocated on his part.

The Queen trusts that all will go well this evg. . . .

1146 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. December 1. 1884.

You have honored me far more than I deserve by the letter you have so kindly written to me.

In carrying out The Queen's commands I found my duty greatly facilitated by the patient attention you always paid to what I had to say, and by the free and open manner in which you spoke to me on the questions under consideration. I hope now that I may sincerely congratulate you on the Agreement being complete.

1147 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. 18 Dec. 1884.

The Queen wishes to mention a subject to Mr. Gladstone w<sup>h</sup> she has little doubt he will gladly assent to.—She understands (tho'

they have *not asked* for it) that it w<sup>ld</sup> greatly gratify the excellent old Centenarian Patriarch Sir Moses Montefiori<sup>1</sup> as well as all his belongings & the Jewish Community—if the Baronetcy were to be extended to the Son of his favourite nephew who died 3 years ago, and w<sup>h</sup> w<sup>ld</sup> otherwise be extinct when good old Sir Moses dies.—In the case of Sir Anthony de Rothschild the Baronetcy was given so that his nephew succeeded to it. Sir Moses Montefiori is an excellent man, charitable to the highest degree & universally respected—& the Queen w<sup>ld</sup> be vy glad to pay him this mark of respect.

The Queen is sorry she did not see Mr. Gladstone before he left Town—but has no doubt that he needed rest after all the excitement & anxiety of the last few weeks.—

Is he thinking of going anywhere for change of air ?

We shall go to Osborne on the 17th D.V.

#### 1148 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

HAWARDEN. 10 Dec. 1884.

Mr. Gladstone acknowledges with his humble duty Your Majesty's letter of the 8th in which Your Majesty so kindly expresses a disposition to entertain favourably the idea of extending, that is to say of renewing Sir Moses Montefiori's Baronetcy in favour of his nephew's son. Mr. Gladstone will at once proceed to make the needful inquiries.

Mr. Gladstone has been happy to escape into the country and his sense of relief will be much enhanced if only progress can be made in this most embarrassing question of Egyptian Finance, on which he thinks that the conduct of most of the Powers does them little credit.

In answer to Your Majesty's kind inquiry, he is desirous not to leave home unless the state of his health should require it, for this reason among others that it a good deal deranges the course of business. .

#### 1149 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

HAWARDEN CASTLE. Dec. 20. 1884.

Mr. Gladstone with his humble duty ventures upon forwarding to Your Majesty an article from the *Politischer Tagesbericht*, on a

<sup>1</sup> Sir M. Montefiore, b. 1784.

recent speech of Prince Bismarck's, which he thinks may a little interest or entertain Your Majesty.

Mr. Gladstone also offers his congratulations, and humble good wishes, on the return of Christmastide.

### 1150 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

OSBORNE. *Christmas Day*. 1884.

The Queen thanks Mr. Gladstone for his letter with the newspaper extract wh<sup>h</sup> is interesting.

She wishes to offer Mr. & Mrs. Gladstone & their family many Good Wishes for the Season & for New Year.—

Alas ! to the Queen since Dec. 14—61 & 78<sup>1</sup> this Season is sadly overshadowed—& the last 2 years have added to the heavy Clouds—wh<sup>h</sup> always seem the heaviest at festive Seasons—when the dear faces are missed who added so much to the pleasure of such Times ! It is a terrible trial to the poor D<sup>cess</sup> of Albany.

The Queen is not ungrateful, but the vy reverse for the many blessings left her but Tennyson's fine Lines :

“ But over all things brooding slept  
“ The quiet sense of something lost.”

express the feeling wh<sup>h</sup> must remain.

Mr. Gladstone is fortunate enough not to know—what it is to have one's dearest & nearest taken from you & to have to live on—withall “ the same & yet *all changed*.”

Before concluding the Queen w<sup>ld</sup> wish to congratulate him & Mrs. Gladstone on their 2<sup>nd</sup> son's marriage.

### 1151 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

30th Dec. 1884.

Princess Beatrice was yesterday evening engaged to Prince Henry of Battenberg younger brother of Prince Louis, Prince of Battenberg. The Princess will continue to live with me as before.

### 1152 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

HAWARDEN. 30th December. 1884.

Mr. Gladstone with his humble duty returns grateful thanks for Your Majesty's condescending to notice the approaching marriage of his son the Rector of this Parish, and for reminding him how

<sup>1</sup> Anniversaries of the death of the Prince Consort and Princess Alice.



free his own lot has been from those forms of severe trial which have been decreed for Your Majesty.

The marriage is one founded on deliberate and warm personal attachment without worldly motive, and there is every reason to hope for it the blessing of God.

It is eminently good for Mr. Gladstone to receive Your Majesty's timely reference to his own case, for on the one hand he feels that the visitations which he has been spared would if ordained for him have totally disabled him from the pursuit of his daily duties ; and on the other that the pressure and demands of those duties in detail have tended and do tend to deaden in his mind the sense of thankfulness which he ought so heartily to cherish.

They have not he hopes made him wholly insensible to Your Majesty's very different lot and especially to the character of that terrible bereavement which left so deep a trace on Your Majesty's heart and life.

Reverting to Your Majesty's telegram of today and his reply, Mr. Gladstone respectfully but warmly trusts that the approaching marriage of the Princess Beatrice may besides being happy in itself add to Your Majesty's remaining comforts and consolations.

#### 1153 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

*Jan. 1. 1885.*

Mr. Gladstone reports to Your Majesty with his humble duty that he has examined to the best of his ability the matter relating to the Montifiore Baronetcy, on which Your Majesty was pleased to offer a suggestion. The result is that he has reason to believe the present venerable possessor of the title to be averse to its revival ; and Your Majesty will probably regard this fact as a sufficient reason for not entering further into the question.

#### 1154 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

*OSBORNE. Jan. 2. 1885.*

. . . It will be a comfort to her to know that her beloved, dutiful & devoted daughter will be well & tenderly cared for—when she is gone. . . .

The marriage w<sup>ld</sup> take place in the summer, here, & not at St. George's where the association of a most melancholy character w<sup>ld</sup> make it almost impossible. . . .

The Queen is g<sup>lly</sup> alarmed at the latest news from Kaitoum, for she thinks the danger is great from want of food.

Of course if Sir *Moses* Montefiore does not wish the Baronetcy to be extended of course it sh<sup>ld</sup> not be thought of.

1155 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

10, DOWNING STREET. Jan. 3. 1885.

Mr. Gladstone presents his humble duty and acknowledges Your Majesty's gracious letter and the statement of such marked domestic interest as affecting Your Majesty's comfort and happiness which it contains. . . .

He shares as do his colleagues Your Majesty's regret and anxiety in regard to the recent telegram from General Gordon. He does not however abandon the hope that the gallant General may still be enabled to enlarge his stores of provision by such means as he has heretofore successfully employed, and it is also matter for consolation as far as it goes, that the skill and energy of Lord Wolseley and the force under his command provide all the means that human forethought could command for meeting the unparalleled difficulties of this extraordinary case.

Mr. Gladstone returns to Hawarden this afternoon by the desire of Sir A. Clark in order to try whether a remission of business there for a few days may act on him so beneficially as to obviate the necessity of considering any further measure which might cause any more serious difficulties in connexion with the regular progress of public business.

1156 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

OSBORNE. Jan. 5. 1885.

The Queen thanks Mr. Gladstone for his 2 kind letters.—

She is v<sup>y</sup> sorry to hear he has been & is unwell, but not surprised.

Egypt & South Africa are a great anxiety. She fears that Lord Derby<sup>1</sup> has shown her estimate of him when he entered the Government, to be a true one.—

The Queen hopes soon to hear that Mr. Gladstone is better. His absence now w<sup>ld</sup> be serious. . . .

<sup>1</sup> Colonial Secretary.

1157 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

HAWARDEN. Jan. 5. 1885.

Your Majesty having graciously inquired concerning Mr. Gladstone's health, humbly reports that Sir A. Clark was much pleased with the improvement in his sleep at the close of last week, and hopes that if that improvement should be established at Hawarden with the aid of a short relief from business, it might be needless to entertain the idea of any more decisive measure.

Mr. Gladstone began on Friday to experience lumbago and some other secondary derangements, which look as if the principal disturbance has changed its seat, and therewith its character from one which is critical with reference to the dispatch of business to another which is of inferior gravity and may easily be borne. This change has continued since the arrival at home and if the enemy, so to speak, does not re-establish himself in the tissues of the brain, Mr. Gladstone will look forward cheerfully to his being shortly ousted altogether.

1158 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

OSBORNE. January 20. 1885.

The Queen says she is tired of complaining to you about Mr. Chamberlain's speeches and she thinks you must be equally tired at receiving her remonstrances.

Her Majesty must however call your attention to his recent speeches which both in tone and matter were not such as should have been delivered by a Cabinet Minister.

1159 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

OSBORNE. Jan. 22. 1885.

The Queen thanks Mr. Gladstone for his 2 last letters. She is of course much engrossed with the great news of last night<sup>1</sup>—& is more than ever proud of her gallant & noble Troops, but her heart bleeds for the loss of so many brave & distinguished men. Poor Colonel Burnaby, whose bravery & extraordinary enterprise could not but be admired—has fallen at last—with his face to the foe—the death a true Soldier always courts, & which the Queen—as a Soldier's daughter & Mother—cannot but admire!—

<sup>1</sup> Battle of Abu Klea, January 17, 1885.

The Queen & Princess think Mr. & Mrs. Gladstone will like to possess this likeness of her future Son-in-law.<sup>1</sup>

Besides his good looks he has a most charming countenance.

1160 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Partly printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 593-4.)

January 23, 1885.

Mr. Gladstone on his wife's part and his own humbly thanks Your Majesty for the gracious presentation of a Photograph of Prince Louis [*sic*] of Battenberg, which conveys the most favourable and flattering impressions.

Mr. Gladstone humbly and entirely shares in Your Majesty's strong sense of the high military qualities displayed alike by the commanders and the men of Your Majesty's army in the battle of Abu Klea ; and likewise Your Majesty's deep concern for the losses they have sustained. May the Almighty grant a speedy termination to the bloodshed, of which there has been so much in the Soudan ; and dissipate the fears which the recent action tends to suggest, of a more determined resistance, on the part of the Soudanese, to the advance of General Lord Wolseley, and to his really humane mission, than he had anticipated.

Mr. Gladstone has not troubled Your Majesty with any remarks touching the criticisms of public journals on the administration of Lord Derby, mainly because he is not quite sure to what particular part they are addressed. He finds that sometimes charges of vacillation and indecision are advanced as the most convenient method of attack, when an explicit avowal of the real aims of the critic is deemed inexpedient. He hopes there is no ground for these charges but he does not pretend to so minute an acquaintance with all the affairs of great and complicated Departments as to warrant a sweeping and unequivocal judgment on his part concerning them. If however it were the fact that the real ground of animadversion is, in this instance, to be found in Lord Derby's slowness, or positive reluctance, to meet the demands now rife in some of the Colonies for a system of annexations intended to forestall the colonising efforts of other countries, Mr. Gladstone could not honestly suppress the fact that he himself, for one, is firmly opposed on principle to such a system, and he believes that

<sup>1</sup> Prince Henry of Battenberg.

herein is only a humble representative of convictions, which were not general only, but universal among the Statesmen of the first 30 years of his political life.

1161 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to General Ponsonby*

*Private.*

HOLKER. 31st January. 1885.

1. Finding that Mr. Chamberlain is well again—as has appeared from unequivocal signs—I have made a communication to him to the effect that after what has been said on the recent occasion there had better be some explanations among us when we meet.

2. I will not trouble the Queen with a separate letter on the subject but I felt very much, and my brother has felt yet more, her gracious kindness in writing to express her concern and sympathy on the occasion of my brother's heavy loss. . . .

1162

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[*Telegram*]<sup>1</sup>

5th February. 1885.

These news from Khartoum are frightful and to think that all this might have been prevented and many precious lives saved by earlier action is too fearful.

1163 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 598–600)

DOWNING STREET. Feb. 5. 1885.

Mr. Gladstone has had the honour this day to receive Your Majesty's Telegram *en clair*, relating to the deplorable intelligence received this day from Lord Wolseley, and stating that it is too fearful to consider that the fall of Khartoum might have been prevented and many precious lives saved by earlier action.

Mr. Gladstone does not presume to estimate the means of judgment possessed by Your Majesty, but so far as his information and recollection at the moment go, he is not altogether able to follow the conclusion which Your Majesty has been pleased thus to announce.

Mr. Gladstone is under the impression that Lord Wolseley's force might have been sufficiently advanced to save Khartoum had not a large portion of it been detached by a circuitous route along the river, upon the express application of General Gordon,

<sup>1</sup> Not in cipher.

to occupy Berber on the way to the final destruction. He speaks however with submission on a point of this kind.

There is indeed in some quarters a belief that the River route ought to have been chosen at an earlier period, and had the navigation of the Nile in its upper region been as well known as that of the Thames, this might have been a just ground of reproach. But when, on the first symptoms that the position of General Gordon in Khartoum was not secure, Your Majesty's advisers at once sought from the most competent persons the best information they could obtain respecting the Nile route, the balance of testimony and authority was decidedly against it, and the idea of the Suakin and Berber route, with all its formidable difficulties was entertained in preference ; nor was it until a much later period that the weight of opinion and information warranted the definitive choice of the Nile route.

Your Majesty's ministers were well aware that climate and distance were far more formidable than the sword of the enemy, and they deemed it right while providing adequate military means never to lose from view what might have proved to be the destruction of the gallant army in the Soudan. It is probable that abundant wrath and indignation will on this occasion be poured out upon them, nor will they complain if so it should be ; but a partial consolation may be found on reflecting that neither aggressive policy, nor military disaster nor any gross error in the application of means to ends, has marked this series of difficult proceedings, which indeed have greatly redounded to the honour of Your Majesty's forces of all ranks and arms.

In these remarks, which Mr. Gladstone submits with his humble duty, he has taken it for granted that Khartoum has fallen through the exhaustion of its means of defence. But Your Majesty may observe from the telegram that this is uncertain. Both the Correspondent's account, and that of Major Wortley, refer to the delivery of the town by treachery, a contingency which on some previous occasions General Gordon has treated as far from improbable ; and which, if the motive existed, was likely to operate quite independently of the particular time at which a relieving force might arrive. The presence of the enemy in force would naturally suggest the occasion, or perhaps even the apprehension of the approach of the British Army.

In pointing to these considerations, Mr. Gladstone is far from

assuming that they are conclusive upon the whole case ; in dealing with which the Government has hardly ever, at any of its stages, been furnished sufficiently with these means of judgment which rational men usually require. It may be that, on a retrospect, many errors will appear to have been committed. There are many reproaches, from the most opposite quarters, to which it might be difficult to supply a conclusive answer. Among them and perhaps among the most difficult, as far as Mr. Gladstone can judge, would be the reproach of those who might argue that our proper business was the protection of Egypt, that it never was in military danger from the Mahdi and that the most prudent course would have been to provide it with adequate frontier defences, and to assume no responsibility for the lands beyond the desert. <sup>a</sup>

1164

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 601.)[Telegram]<sup>1</sup>

6th February. 1885.

It is absolutely necessary that we must ascertain Gordon's fate.

Trust Cabinet will promptly agree on a bold and decided course. Hesitation and half measures will be disastrous. What is Lord Wolseley's and Baring's advice? Have you consulted the Duke of Cambridge and Lord Napier on the military situation?

1165

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

OSBORNE. Feb. 6. 1885.

The Queen has to acknowledge Mr. Gladstone's letter of yesterday, as well as his Telegram. With reference to the latter she must repeat that it is quite a *mistake* to think the *Prince of Wales* "desired" to visit Ireland. It is the *very reverse*. He has *no wish* to do so—& it was Lord Spencer<sup>2</sup> who *urged it so much*.

But the P<sup>ce</sup> of Wales said to the Queen—"If the Govt. wish it, vy much & think it will do good—I am ready to do it." But the Govt. must be *entirely responsible for advising it & protecting the P<sup>ce</sup> & P<sup>cess</sup> from all danger*.—And the Govt. must *pay for it*.

The Queen will write later to Mr. Gladstone abt the deplorable *event* of the fall of Khartoum & of the uncertain fate of that gallant man G<sup>l</sup>. Gordon, as soon as she can trust herself to write about it,—her feelings are so strong!

<sup>1</sup> In cipher.<sup>2</sup> Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.

1166 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 601-2)DOWNING STREET. *February 6. 1885.*

Mr. Gladstone . . . apprises Your Majesty that the Cabinet assembled at eleven this day to consider the announcement from Lord Wolseley of the fall of Khartoum, and the measures to be adopted in consequence.

It being of great importance to lose no time, the Ministers agreed upon the terms of a message to Lord Wolseley, copy of which is inclosed, and which, having regard to the purport of Lord Wolseley's military statement, Mr. Gladstone trusts may commend itself to Your Majesty.

The Cabinet also considered the terms of an announcement for the public suited to the circumstances of the moment.

Mr. Gladstone read to the Cabinet the ciphered telegram<sup>1</sup> which he had the honour to receive this morning from Your Majesty. In addition to what he has written above, he humbly informs Your Majesty that the Cabinet have Lord Wolseley's advice only as in the telegram of yesterday, that Sir E. Baring appears to await the reply of the Government, and that Lord Hartington will do his best to learn the views of military authorities: but the Cabinet are strongly of opinion that the military questions attaching to the situation in the Soudan should be left to Lord Wolseley and that his discretion should not be fettered by regard to them. . . .

ENCLOSURE.

*Feb. 6 1885.*

Objects to be aimed at now are

1. Safety of Gordon if still alive which must be assumed till we are certain of his death.
  2. To check advance of Mahdi in districts now undisturbed.
- Whether it will be ultimately necessary to advance on Khartoum cannot now be decided but hazardous operation at this season does not appear essential to above objects.

From political point of view there would be disadvantage in a retrograde movement unconnected with military concentration but all such considerations must yield to military necessities.

<sup>1</sup> 1167.



We have absolute confidence in your judgment, and give you fullest discretion to use forces at your disposal for accomplishment of above main objects.

We are prepared to give you any further assistance in our power which you may desire either by despatch of troops to Suakim or in any other manner you indicate.

1167

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

6th Feb. 1885.

I have telegraphed to Lord Hartington<sup>1</sup> my entire approval of Telegram; but have strongly impressed on him the imperative necessity for leaving Lord Wolseley wholly unfettered.

1168 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

10, DOWNING STREET. February 7. 1885.

Mr. Gladstone reports . . . that the Cabinet met today to consider Lord Wolseley's telegram in reply to theirs of yesterday and found from it that it was necessary for them to enter further into the consideration of the policy requisite to be pursued upon the fall or betrayal of Khartoum, so far as the present state of facts would enable them, in order to place the British General in a position to determine fully on his military measures. They arrived upon full consideration at the conclusion expressed in the telegram of which a copy is inclosed.

The Cabinet held some conversation on the subject of employing Indian Troops in the Soudan. They see several objections to such a measure, and would be reluctant to advise resort to it except in case of necessity, which does not at present appear to have arisen. . . .

1169 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

Feb. 9. 1885.

Mr. Gladstone . . . reports to Your Majesty that the Cabinet today considered the military requisitions of Lord Wolseley for Indian and other troops; and approved of the proposals of Lord Hartington and Lord Kimberley<sup>2</sup> thereupon. They also thought that Lord Wolseley should be consulted as to the choice of a commander for the expedition to Suakim.

<sup>1</sup> Secretary for War.<sup>2</sup> Secretary for India.

The Cabinet agreed that Estimates should be framed for the War Charges growing out of the contemplated operations. . . .

With reference to the supposed willingness of the Italian Government to cooperate in the military measures required by events in the Soudan, the Ministers are of opinion that the acceptance of the aid of another Power in discharging the peculiarly British responsibility, would be detrimental to the moral effect which it is requisite to produce. But this view was not intended to exclude Italy from any proper and expedient operation lying outside the scope of British plans. . . .

1170 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

*Feb. 9. 1885.*

Mr. Gladstone . . . has to acquaint Your Majesty that while he has for some time desired to make an arrangement for bringing Lord Rosebery into the Cabinet,<sup>1</sup> such arrangement has only now become practicable, or he would have intimated the prospect of it to Your Majesty beforehand.

The near approach of the meeting of Parliament and the rather long suspense as to the Office of Works, have made him desirous to forward his submissions without delay.

Your Majesty is aware of Mr. Lefevre's<sup>2</sup> long and highly meritorious services.

1171

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

*OSBORNE. 10th Feb. 1885.*

In returning this submission approved she wishes to say to Mr. Gladstone that she is vy glad that Lord Rosebery enters the Cabinet & that the Title of Lord Privy Seal—tho' without a salary is revived.—The Queen also wishes to express her satisfaction of vigorous action being at last decided on, tho' her heart aches at the hard Service wh<sup>h</sup> this will entail & the trying climate to wh<sup>h</sup> alas ! they must be exposed !

May God guide & protect them !

The Queen approves Italian help being declined but trusts that our satisfaction at Italian sympathy shown as now sh<sup>ld</sup> be expressed. It may be vy useful.

<sup>1</sup> As First Commissioner of Works and Lord Privy Seal with a seat in the Cabinet.

<sup>2</sup> Retiring First Commissioner of Works, transferred to the Post Office with a seat in the Cabinet.

The Queen's reason for hoping that some few Indian Troops may be used is on account of their being better able to bear the climate.

1172 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

10, DOWNING STREET. *Feb. 11. 1885.*

Mr. Gladstone . . . reports that a short Cabinet was held today to consider further, after a reference to Lord Wolseley, the question of the chief command of the Suakim expedition.

The Cabinet were of opinion that General Graham should be appointed to the chief command, and Major General Greaves should be the Chief of the Staff.

The Cabinet have no official confirmation of the reports of today concerning the death of General Gordon and the mode of the capture of Khartoum.

1173 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[*Telegram*]

*12th Feb. 1885.*

Is no notice to be taken of the open monstrous threat in a newspaper published in America by Irish to kill the Prince of Wales ?

1174 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

[*Telegram*]

*12th Feb. 1885.*

Humble duty. The attention of American Government is called to outrageous paragraph by a telegram and confidence expressed that they will not allow it to go unpunished.

1175 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

10, DOWNING STREET. *17th Feb. 1885.*

Mr. Gladstone humbly reports to Your Majesty that the Cabinet at its meeting today considered at large the means of bringing before Parliament in the best manner the conclusions which have been arrived at with respect to the Soudan. Papers will be presented on Thursday in the usual manner, and the Cabinet think that, as military telegrams are not, by usage, presented, it will be desirable that Mr. Gladstone should in presenting the papers add a statement which shall embody the sub-

stance and effect of the decisions taken, and the motives by which they have been prompted.

The Cabinet are unaware whether any Vote of Censure will be proposed by the Opposition. In any case, there may be discussion on Thursday evening, or a more formal debate may arise on the presentation of the Supplementary Army and Navy Estimates for the remainder of the year 1884-5.

It is not thought expedient by the Cabinet that the offer of troops which has come from Canada should be absolutely declined, but it has come too late for immediate purposes, and is not so large and generous as the offer from Australia. The answer will be that, if operations are prolonged, there will be every disposition to renew the consideration of the subject.

1176      *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

OSBORNE. 18th Feb. 1885.

The Queen commands me to express her regret that the offer of the Canadian Colony has not been accepted as she fears they will be offended.

1177 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

10, DOWNING STREET. 20th February. 1885.

. . . The Cabinet considered a question which was to be put by Mr. Forster to Mr. Gladstone with regard to the offers of military support from the Colonies. It was thought fitting that Mr. Gladstone should acknowledge these offers in terms of great warmth, and should dwell on their historical importance. He undertook to do this. He was likewise to explain the particulars of what has occurred, so far as New South Wales is concerned, because there the offer was early, complete, and accompanied by a state of preparedness which rendered it at once available. He was also to mention somewhat specially a remarkable offer from South Australia, which like New South Wales offered to bear the military charges. But he was to speak of all the offers as dictated by the same spirit, and to express the desire of the Government to apply the same considerations to them all.

Mr. Gladstone has indeed received through Sir H. Ponsonby an expression of Your Majesty's regret that the offer from Canada has not been accepted. Mr. Gladstone is not certain whether Your

Majesty means that such an offer was to be embraced at once irrespective of all conditions, of the approval of the General, and of the question whether considerations of time and place would allow Canadian troops to reach the Soudan in time to take part in the operations now contemplated. Your Majesty will at once perceive the gravity of these considerations, and will apprehend that it might not be satisfactory to Canada were her men to reach Suakim after the operations against Osman Digna, and possibly several months before any other operations were to be commenced in which they could take part. It did not appear, apart from other questions, that the Canadian offer could take effect at once. But the offer has not been rejected in the preliminary reply, and it will stand for further consideration, should it take a practical form. . . .

1178 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Deciphered Telegram]

21st Feb. 1885.

Nothing should be done or any colonial offer accepted without General's approval. Only feared from your letter Canada was being refused.

1179 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. March 1. 1885.

The Queen thanks Mr. Gladstone for his congratulations on the birth of her little granddaughter.<sup>1</sup> Both the dear mother & the little girl are going on as well as possible.

1180 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

(Partly printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 616-17.)

WINDSOR CASTLE. March 1. 1885.

The Queen has rec<sup>d</sup> Mr. Gladstone's letter, announcing the conclusion w<sup>h</sup> the Cabinet has arrived at, that the circumstances of the late divisions in the Houses of Lords & Commons do not warrant their tendering their resignation of Offices.

The Queen trusts from the admissions made by several Ministers in their recent Speeches, to the effect that they were not entirely satisfied with what has passed during the last year—that they are now prepared to *act energetically* as the occasion requires.

<sup>1</sup> Actually a great-granddaughter, Alice, eldest child of Princess Louise of Battenberg, daughter of Princess Alice.

But the Queen *cannot* conceal her dismay at hearing that the Cabinet have *not yet* made up their minds on Lord Wolseley's request<sup>1</sup> w<sup>h</sup> is so warmly supported by Sir Evelyn Baring, and she *must solemnly record her warning* that *this indecision & delay* may produce the *most disastrous consequences*.

Nor does it appear that any determination has been come to with reference to Central Asia.<sup>2</sup>

Although Sir Peter Lumsden<sup>3</sup> reiterates his conviction of the fatal consequences of any Exhibition of weakness, although the Secretary of State for India demands that firm language shall be used to the Russians, & although the Telegrams of yesterday report the gradual & *steady advance* of Russian Troops,—the Queen finds that the Cabinet have *only instructed* Sir P. Lumsden to report home before offering advice & have abstained from giving him any order in the attitude he is to hold towards the Russians with respect to their demands!

The Queen *deeply* laments this want of decision & firmness in the Government w<sup>h</sup> gives her the *greatest anxiety* for the *future*.

The critical position of Affairs described in the last Telegram from Sir P. Lumsden (w<sup>h</sup> the Queen has just seen) renders it necessary that *distinct instructions* should be sent to him *without loss of time*—otherwise the *responsibility* of any *catastrophe* on the frontier *must fall entirely on the Government*.

The Queen wishes Mr. Gladstone to show this letter to Lords Granville, Hartington & Kimberley.

### 1181 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 619.)

10, DOWNING STREET. 7th Mar. 1885.

With reference to a telegram, which has recently received Your Majesty's sanction, on the subject of Lord Wolseley's desire to be constituted Governor-General of the Soudan, Mr. Gladstone humbly presumes to forward to Your Majesty a copy of a list of reasons,<sup>4</sup> concisely stated, which appeared to Mr. Gladstone to constitute very serious difficulties in the way of compliance with Lord Wolseley's desire. It became in his view, and as he thinks in

<sup>1</sup> To be appointed Governor-General of the Sudan.

<sup>2</sup> As to the Russian advance on Merv.

<sup>3</sup> British Commissioner on the Afghan frontier.

<sup>4</sup> They were ten in number.

the view of his colleagues, a matter of much nicety to consider how far it was possible to attain the practical aims of Lord Wolseley, without having to encounter very serious objections.

Mr. Gladstone has taken this liberty in the hope of showing that the Cabinet in reviewing this question last Saturday (at the close of a most laborious and important meeting) were not led by their indolence or indifference or indecision to desire to have mature knowledge before advising Your Majesty in this matter. He trusts Your Majesty may be satisfied on this point.

1182

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 620.)

WINDSOR CASTLE. *March 8. 1885.*

The Queen w<sup>ld</sup> be glad to learn if the last Telegrams from Lord Wolseley & Sir E. Baring have induced Mr. Gladstone to alter his views on Ld. Wolseley's suggestion ?

She can scarcely agree with Mr. Gladstone's reasons against the appointment of Gov<sup>r</sup> : General, as she cannot admit that the experiment failed with Genl. Gordon *until* the Soudanese became aware that he was *not supported from home*. Nor *can* she understand how *any* Ministry *cd* hesitate to take the right course because they are afraid of what the World & Parlt. might say—not that she has any doubt but that Parliament w<sup>ld</sup> willingly support a bold, unhesitating policy.

It appears however that Mr. Gladstone is not certain of the wish of the Cabinet as he only indicates what it "seems" to be & she therefore hopes that they still decide to our giving Lord Wolseley all the support he desires.

1183

*Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 620-1.)

10, DOWNING STREET. *9th Mar. 1885.*

In reply to Your Majesty's letter and enquiry of yesterday, Mr. Gladstone with his humble duty has the honour to report that he has not heard of any disposition in the Cabinet to reopen the question of the Governor-Generalship of the Soudan, since the receipt of the last telegrams from Lord Wolseley and Sir E. Baring ; but he will send Your Majesty's letter to Lord Granville together with a copy of this reply.

Your Majesty will have understood without doubt that the Memorandum he had the honour to transmit was simply a record of his own impressions, and its date marks it as antecedent to the decision of the Government.

Mr. Gladstone is not aware to what date or circumstance Your Majesty refers as marking the knowledge of the Soudanese that General Gordon was not supported from home.

Mr. Gladstone humbly concurs with Your Majesty in thinking that, if a new policy in the Soudan were deemed right, it should be pursued without regard to adverse criticism ; but one of the objections to Lord Wolseley's demand is, that it is avowedly made in order to mark and promote a new policy which the Cabinet has not adopted or deemed right, and of which Lord Wolseley hardly seems to be the proper judge.

In saying the Cabinet "seemed" to have a certain wish, Mr. Gladstone put a construction for himself on a course of anterior proceedings, and not on any decision or conversation as to the advice to be tendered on the Governor-Generalship.

1184 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

HOUSE OF COMMONS. *March 12. 1885.*

Mr. Gladstone humbly thanks Your Majesty on his wife's part and his own for the gracious permission to see the full length portrait of Your Majesty now in course of being painted by Angeli. They were greatly struck by the happy treatment of the figure and attitude generally, and by the promise of an excellent likeness ; warranting the hope that the work when completed will be one of great historical importance and permanent value.

1185 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. *March 13. 1885.*

. . . Her Majesty repeats that she has no desire to annex the Soudan but she considers that the best mode of attaining her wish, to retire from the Country, is to take possession for the time, in the name of the Khedive, of the important points, to assume full responsibilities and to endeavour to set up a Government for the Soudanese, and when this is established to come away.

This is the policy you seemed to favor in your recent letter.

In order to attain this end the fullest powers should be granted



to those who are on the spot, to Sir Evelyn Baring and to Lord Wolseley both of whom were selected by you for the offices they hold, and who therefore should be accorded your fullest support.

This is the reason why The Queen wishes Lord Wolseley to be named Governor General and also why she desires that he may be allowed to issue his proclamation even though that might be somewhat modified if necessary.

The Queen is glad to perceive that the arrest of Zebehr has been sanctioned and earnestly hopes that Lord Wolseley's other requests may be complied with.

### 1186 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 624-5.)

10, DOWNING STREET. 13-14 *March*. 1885.

Mr. Gladstone . . . apprises Your Majesty that the Cabinet this day considered the terms of a dispatch and Memorandum in which Your Majesty's Government propose to state to the Government of Russia that its proposal of an Afghan frontier is inadmissible, and in which is set forth another line which, upon the information they possess, they deem to be just. They think that the country between the Russian line and the English Line should be treated for the purposes of the inquiry as a separate zone, marking out, Northward and Southward, the extreme limits in which the inquiry shall extend. The Cabinet agreed on the terms in which they conceive that these important documents may go forward. . . .

### 1187 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. *March* 14. 1885.

Although our relations with Russia are in a most critical state The Queen feels sure you will do all that is possible to avert a conflict with that Country and, if the opportunity arises, to avail yourself of any offer of mediation when the questions at issue are distinctly defined. .

### 1188 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 628.)

WINDSOR CASTLE. *March* 14. 1885.

The Queen is compelled with regret to call Mr. Gladstone's attention to the fact that the Telegram which the Cabinet of the

inst. proposed to send Lord Wolseley & which contained the serious intimation that the operations of her Troops in the Soudan might be affected by the critical state of affairs in Affghanistan, was *despatched without her knowledge* & that it was *not communicated* to her till this m<sup>o</sup>. !

The idea of the possibility of arresting the *all important* attack of Gl. Graham announced evy where as the "crushing of Osman Digna" on the v<sup>y</sup> eve of its being undertaken—quite staggers her—for the effect w<sup>ld</sup> be *most disastrous & ruinous*—& w<sup>ld</sup> have the further effect of causing a serious panic—as regards our relations with Russia.—The Queen c<sup>ld</sup> not give consent to such a *sign* of weakness & vacillation.

1189 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to General Ponsonby*

(Partly printed in *Life of Gladstone*, III, 179-80.)

10, DOWNING STREET. WHITEHALL. *March 15. 1885.*

I will at once make known your letter to my colleagues.

Truth forbids me to take credit with Her Majesty for the leaning you ascribe to me. You rest I think upon my recent reference to a speech of Sir S. Northcote's which I viewed with interest for its comparative moderation, and because it seemed to restrict the sphere of action to Khartoum and Berber; though he differed from the Government in proposing to engage *absolutely* for the establishment of orderly government, yet he excluded from his view the chief part of the Soudan.

Sir Evelyn Baring was appointed to carry onwards a declared and understood policy in Egypt when all share in the management of the Soudan was beyond our province. To Lord Wolseley as General of the forces in Egypt, and on account of the arduous character of the work before him, we are bound to render in all military matters a firm and ungrudging support. We have, accordingly, not scrupled to counsel, on his recommendation, very heavy charges on the country and military questions of the highest importance. But we have no right to cast on him any responsibility beyond what is strictly military. It is not surely possible that he should decide policy, and that we should adopt and answer for it, even where it is in conflict with the announcements we have made in Parliament.

In the arrest of Zebehr we have certainly gone very far, but we admit the overruling force of military necessity.

1190

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*WINDSOR CASTLE. *March 17. 1885.*

. . . It seems to the Queen that Turkey has as great an interest in the destruction of the Mahdi's power as ourselves and Mr. Wyndham's No. 130 marked secret wh the Queen has just seen gives proof of the Mahdi's intentions. It is not the going to Khartoum wh is the *object* we solely have in view—it is the destruction of the Mahdi, who if not subdued wld overrun Asia Minor,—Turkey & Lower Egypt—& *there* oblige us to wage a much more serious War—than the one we are now engaged in. It is *this* which we *must* keep in *view*, viz: the *real great ultimate* object—wh must not be checked & changed by fits & starts—& it is this wh should be explained to Parliament—& wh wld be understood.

1191 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*HOUSE OF COMMONS. *17th March. 1885.*

. . . Mr. Gladstone humbly concurs in Your Majesty's view as to the Sultan and the Mahdi—Indeed it seems to him that the Sultan has the greater interest of the two Powers in the overthrow of the Mahdi, whose hostility to this country is local and accidental, whereas he appears to strike at the root of the Sultan's power as the Caliph of Islam.

Mr. Gladstone's impression is that closer relations with Turkey as to Egypt and the Soudan might long since have been adjusted by the efforts of Your Majesty's Government, but for the peculiar character of the Sultan. It may be that circumstances stronger than his own will have now at length brought him to consider some steps of this kind to be desirable for him.

Mr. Gladstone has not troubled Your Majesty further since Saturday with explanations touching the recent telegram of inquiry to Lord Wolseley, in consequence of his having found that Lord Hartington had addressed Your Majesty fully on the subject.

1192 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*HOUSE OF COMMONS. *17-18, March. 1885.*

Mr. Gladstone reports . . . that in concert with Lord Granville<sup>1</sup> he this day read in his place the telegram of yesterday which

<sup>1</sup> Foreign Secretary.

declares the attitude of the Russian Government with regard to further advances of its troops in Afghanistan, and renounces the principle of further advance unless under provocation or in the case of some extraordinary event such as a disturbance in Pendjeh. This reservation provoked derisive exclamations from the least prudent and responsible part of the Opposition but it was temperately and prudently received by the House at large.

Mr. Gladstone also announced to the House that the Financial convention for Egypt was to be signed tomorrow by the Ambassadors acting as Plenipotentiaries and that the Declaration relating to it had actually been signed today. . . .

1193 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

WINDSOR CASTLE. 23rd March. 1885.

After Sir E. Baring's Telegram 171 of 22nd inst. you must make Wolseley Governor General. You must overlook smaller objections and support Lord Wolseley by every means in your power. Make his request known and do not refuse him, but remember Gordon. The fighting at Suakim shows the immense difficulties we have and refusal after this may entail additional bloodshed and possible failure.

1194 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

[Telegram]

23rd March. 1885.

Your Majesty's telegram received and sent to Lord Granville to whom I had already written on the various points raised by Sir E. Baring's telegram.

1195 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. March 24. 1885.

The Queen is very glad to hear you are going to comply to some extent with Lord Wolseley's request.

1196 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

April 4. 1885.

Mr. Gladstone . . . reports that the Cabinet met today, and were agreed in thinking that the Ministers for War and India were sufficiently authorised to proceed with such military pre-

parations as are demanded by the Government of India in view of the State of affairs on the Afghan frontier.

The Cabinet considered fully the terms of the despatch of M. de Giers<sup>1</sup> dated March 15, and the proposal it contains to define beforehand at the will of the Russian Government the true frontier, of which the Commission is subsequently to examine and rectify the details—Under cover of civil and amicable language a plan is conveyed which appears to be, if severely viewed, almost insulting.

It was felt impossible by the Cabinet to proceed upon a basis which, apart from intrinsic demerits, appeared to set out from the assumption that the two Powers were not to meet upon an equal footing in the inquiry as to the Afghan frontier. . . .

The Cabinet agreed with Lord Granville<sup>2</sup> and he returned to M. Staal<sup>3</sup> to announce their adhesion and to express again their conviction that such a proposal as that of March 15 could not be the last word of the Imperial Government, and the hope of a further communication. . . .

1197

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

AIX LES BAINS. April 6. 1885.

The Queen wishes to express her satisfaction to Mr. Gladstone at this firm & proper tone held by the Govt. to the Russian Ambassador,—w<sup>h</sup> she cannot help hoping may have some effect—as she thinks the Russians expected the Govt. w<sup>ld</sup> swallow everything ;—especially as—whether wrongly or rightly it is believed that Mr. Gladstone's views lean towards Russia.—

It is very disappointing that Osman Digna has disappeared—no doubt much weakened—and it will now be necessary to consider what course we sh<sup>ld</sup> take to carry into effect our intentions. Lord Wolseley can alone judge of what can or cannot be done. One thing the Queen is certain of—& that is we cannot quit the Soudan without leaving some permanent Govt. whether Soudanese, Egyptian or European—w<sup>h</sup> shall give security for the future & w<sup>h</sup> shall open out the Country for commerce & civilization.—

The Govt. *must* let the World, beginning with Gt. Britain know what our real intentions are, & that precious blood may not

<sup>1</sup> Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs.

<sup>2</sup> Foreign Secretary.

<sup>3</sup> Russian Ambassador in London.

have been shed *in vain*, w<sup>h</sup> is what alarms & displeases many people—& with right.

1198 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

9th April. 1885.

Mr. Gladstone reports . . . that the Cabinet spent the time of its sitting this day principally in considering the terms of the various telegrams received from Russia and the Afghan Frontier, with regard to the deplorable attack on Pendjeh and the defeat of the Afghan force,<sup>1</sup> and the exact terms in which communication of the intelligence might be made to Parliament. The result is to be found in the statement delivered by Mr. Gladstone in answer to Sir Stafford Northcote, from very full notes, which supplied the whole substance of what he said, and which he trusts and believes Your Majesty will see no reason to disapprove.

The subject will of course continue to receive close and constant attention.

The Cabinet incline to a favourable view of the negotiations concerning the frontier, after the concessions which Russia has now been induced to make, could the catastrophe at Pendjeh be so dealt with as to allow them to go forward which at present remains uncertain.

1199 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

[*Telegram*]

10th April. 1885.

May I circulate among my Colleagues Your Majesty's letter of Monday.<sup>2</sup>

Cabinet today considered news from Afghanistan and agreed on terms of my statement in House of Commons today, to which I humbly beg to refer Your Majesty. Usual letter follows.

1200

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[*Telegram*]

AIX LES BAINS. 10th April. 1885.

You may certainly circulate the letter.

<sup>1</sup> A Russian force had violated the Afghan frontier and defeated a native force at Penjdeh, March 30, 1885.

<sup>2</sup> 1197.

1201 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

AIX LES BAINS. 10th April. 1885.

Is it dignified that British Commission should remain on the Afghan Boundary any longer ?

1202 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

April 11. 1885.

. . . With reference to the unhappy contingency of a possible war with Russia, the Cabinet considered the question of an occupation of Port Hamilton<sup>1</sup> in Corean territory, and thought that Lord Granville<sup>2</sup> should make such arrangements with China and Japan as would render that occupation available in case of need.

1203 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

12th April. 1885.

. . . I think conduct of Russian General requires great explanation and an apology ought to be demanded. If Russia is sincerely anxious to avoid war, she can still do so. What has Amir said to defeat at Penjdeh ?

1204 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

April 15. 1885.

Mr. Gladstone humbly reports to Your Majesty that the Cabinet advise with deep respect that the statement contained in the inclosed memorandum should be made on behalf of the Government when on Monday, or at the very latest, Tuesday, next, a vote or votes are presented to the House of Commons for additional military expenditure, on a large scale, having reference to the Soudan, to India, and the Afghan frontier, and to the general position of the Empire. This advice is the result of the deliberations of the Cabinet both as to substance and as to form in what the present exigencies of the Empire demand as to the use of its military resources. The Memorandum limits the advice now tendered to what appears to be of immediate necessity, and contains various qualifications attaching to the general proposition at which the Cabinet have arrived. Mr. Gladstone's recent

<sup>1</sup> An island off the southern extremity of Korea.<sup>2</sup> Foreign Secretary

reports will have prepared Your Majesty for this or even possibly for a somewhat wider recommendation ; and he loses no time in telegraphing to Your Majesty the most essential parts of the Memorandum.

It is a paper rough in form and needing a little handling before it could be actually spoken ; but the essence and spirit would be wholly unchanged. . . .

1205

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

16th April, 1885.

I await fuller details on reasons of reversal of policy.<sup>1</sup> Financial question was respected as a matter of course and Russian complication arose before I left England ; yet you gave me no hint.

1206 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

[Telegram]

16th April, 1885.

. . . In elucidating report of yesterday humbly lay before Your Majesty following considerations. Decision of February taken on assumption that Berber could be taken this season ; expedition to Khartoum would not involve very large addition to Wolseley's force ; Mahdi might advance, imperil retirement and threaten Egypt ; apparent check to our arms might have serious effect in India and that Country would support Government.

Since then great changes in all these points. Berber has not been taken ; Wolseley's demands have greatly increased ; Mahdi has not advanced ; forces can be retired ; Egypt can be defended elsewhere ; circumstances have wholly altered in India.

Examining general position Cabinet has considered as explained in telegram of yesterday.

1207

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

April 16-17, 1885.

Received letter and telegrams. Wish no final decision to be taken till you receive letter. You entirely overlook the moral effect of so hasty a change of policy. Those on the spot must be best judges, especially Lord Wolseley.

<sup>1</sup> In the Sudan.



1208 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 638.)

[Telegram]

17th April. 1885.

Your Majesty's telegram received. Mr. Gladstone for himself humbly thinks that moral effect in England and Europe will be good, that chief danger of moral effect locally has already been incurred by retirement actually made, finally that there is no chance of inducing Parliament to maintain the present position of the Nile army.

1209

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone**Circulate.*

[Telegram]

17th April. 1885. Recd. Friday Night.

I have written to grant permission for declaration to be made on the understanding that it is a postponement, not abandonment.

1210

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 638-40.)

AIX LES BAINS. April 17. 1885.

. . . She thinks it right to be perfectly open & unreserved in her communications with Mr. Gladstone, as she wishes him also to be with her & therefore she must frankly tell him she has been much distressed & startled by this *sudden* intention of a *total reversal* of the policy declared two months ago *without any* hint or sign of warning to her, that such a movement was contemplated by the Government.

After the loss of all the blood & treasure which has been spent, the Queen *cannot* but view the abandonment of this policy without the attainment of any *definite* results, as *painful in the extreme*!

Before the retrograde movement is agreed to, the Queen is anxious to know, whether, in justice to ourselves, to the World & to civilization, it is not possible to leave *some* kind of established government in the districts where we have overthrown the existing authority.—Whether by money payment or otherwise the Tribes around Souakim could be conciliated, so as to *prevent* them from taking vengeance on the "friendlies" who have supported us.—

The Queen is anxious that our withdrawal from the Upper Nile, & from Souakim sh<sup>d</sup> be *deliberately* made, *without any*

appearance of a hurried retreat & that it sh<sup>ld</sup> be *publicly known* we retired *in consequence* of the overpowering heat.—

The Queen *always* objected to the relinquishment of his mission by General Graham *last* year, but her *warnings* were *disregarded*, & he *consequently* had to *reconquer* the people who *he had* overthrown in March 1884!—

Although it is true, as Mr. Gladstone telegraphs, that the impossibility of taking Berber this Spring has altered the Military aspect of the Campaign the Queen is *scarcely prepared to agree* with Mr. Gladstone's *other* reasons that our retirement *now* will have *no* evil effects in India, & she emphatically *protests ag<sup>st</sup>* the argument that, as the Soudan War was undertaken when the *enthusiasm* of the *English people* demanded it, it sh<sup>ld</sup> *now* be *abandoned* because that *enthusiasm* has *subsided*!! No War & indeed *no Govt.* can be carried on if Ministers have *no fixed principles* by w<sup>h</sup> they are prepared to stand or fall, or if they change their policy according to every fleeting breath of popular opinion!

P.S.—Since writing the above the Queen has rec<sup>d</sup> Mr. Gladstone's & Ld. Hartington's letters of the 15th this m<sup>s</sup>.—

After carefully reading these letters—the Queen will permit the declaration being made to the House of Commons as suggested, for she *understands* that steps will be taken to protect the "friendlies" round Souakim & that this port will still be held by Indian or other Troops.

The Queen does not fully understand what Lord Wolseley's opinions are, as reported to her but she assumes that the withdrawal of the Troops from the Nile is to be ordered *on the advice* of Lord Wolseley—without w<sup>h</sup> it *ought not to take* place.

The Queen's observation with respect to the policy respecting a War being carried on—according to popular feeling—would apply still more strongly to a War with Russia. If that is to be carried on by fits & starts, forward & backward movements according to momentary fancy *at home*; ,better not go to War at all.

1211 (Copy) Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria

[Telegram]

April 18. 1885.

. . . Humble thanks. The governing words appear to me to be the reservation of complete liberty of action for the future. This as I conceive is what Your Majesty enjoins.

1212 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

18th April. 1885.

You will see by my letter<sup>1</sup> that we must show no fear of Russia in the Declaration, *and* put the cause of retirement on the climate.

1213 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

AIX LES BAINS. April 18. 1885.

I have received your telegram<sup>2</sup> but it does not exactly meet my views or indeed fully comply with what is required.

What I mean is that there should be nothing said, when announcing the declaration of CHANGE of *policy*, which could in any way imply fear of war with Russia; but that the impossibility of doing anything during the Summer and the great heat of the desert which presents insurmountable difficulties has induced the Government to withdraw the troops to more temperate climates.

The friendlies also must be absolutely protected or we shall be worse than savages if we leave these poor Tribes to the Mahdi's fury.

I greatly regret that Lord Wolseley's experience and opinions are disregarded as we may have to begin all again—I am deeply grieved at the whole proceeding and hope you will remember my warning—I refer you to my letter which you will get today and which will contain my views.

1214 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

[Telegram]

19th April. 1885.

. . . I with Lord Granville humbly assure Your Majesty we believe intended declaration will be construed in sense quite opposite to fear of Russia. Propose to refer collaterally to climate.

1215 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

April 19. 1885.

In referring solely to Suakim operations I have hope you clearly understand I consent to Declaration on the condition you will not interfere with Graham's active operations on which he is engaged at this moment apparently with good promise of success.

<sup>1</sup> 1213.<sup>2</sup> 1212.

1216 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

April 19. 1885.

No retrograde movement at Suakim should take place in the midst of any active operations.

1217 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

[Telegram]

April 19. 1885.

Your Majesty's telegram humbly received and sent to Lord Hartington.<sup>1</sup>

1218 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

[Telegram]

[April 20. 1885.]

. . . I humbly think that Graham's present operations are in principle within the terms of the Memorandum, also that climate will be a topic more for the debate than for the dry and short preliminary explanation.

1219 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

DARMSTADT. 24th April. 1885.

Think state of affairs<sup>2</sup> very critical only no patching up. We must be firm come what may. It is believed abroad that the Premier will never go to War.

1220 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

DARMSTADT. April 25. 1885.

The Queen asked me, after reading your letter, why you did not notice her anxiety for the safety of the "Friendlies" who stood by us at Suakin, nor her enquiry as to whether we could not establish some settled Government in a Country where we have destroyed the Authority of the Tribal Chiefs. Her Majesty also said she could not understand your allusion to George III and the American War. The Queen supposes you mean that the King was advised to abandon that conflict because the public view changed. But surely in the instance you quote the reason we abandoned the war was because our armies were beaten. The present case is therefore not a parallel one for we have not been defeated by the Soudanese. The Queen has always held that the King was mis-

<sup>1</sup> Secretary for War.<sup>2</sup> Afghan dispute with Russia.

taken in his desire to coerce the American colonists. But from the moment this policy was determined on, Lord North and his Government did their utmost for more than 5 years to carry it into effect, never flinching from their task till it became hopeless, when they resigned office but did not change their opinions to suit the popular cry.

**1221** (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to General Ponsonby*

(Printed in *Life of Gladstone*, III, 181-2)

April 28. 1885.

In further prosecution of my reply to your letter of the 25th I advert to your remarks upon Lord North.

I made no reference to his conduct, I believe, in writing to Her Majesty. What I endeavoured to shew was that King George III without changing his opinion of the justice of his war against colonies, was obliged to give it up on account of a change of public opinion and was not open to blame for so doing.

You state to me that Lord North never flinched from his task till it became hopeless, that he then resigned office but did not change his opinions to suit the popular cry.

The implied contrast to be drawn with the present is obvious.

I admit none of your three propositions.

Lord North did not, as I read history, require to change his opinions to suit the popular cry. They were already in accordance with the popular cry: and it is a serious reproach against him that without sharing his master's belief in the propriety of the wars he long persisted in carrying it on, through subserviency to that master.

Lord North did not resign office for any reason but because he could not help it, being driven from it by some adverse votes of the House of Commons, to which he submitted with great good humour and probably with satisfaction.

Lord North did not so far as I know state the cause to be hopeless. Nor did those who were opposed to him. The movers of the Resolution which drove him out of office, did not proceed upon that ground. General Conway in his speech advised the retention of the ground we held in the Colonies, and the Resolution, which expressed the sense of the House as a body bears a singular resemblance to the announcement we have lately made, as it declares in its first clause that the further prosecution of

offensive war (on the Continent of America) " will be the means of weakening the efforts of this country against her European enemies," February 27, 1782. This was followed on March 4 by an address on the same basis: and by a Resolution declaring that any Ministers who should advise or attempt to frustrate it should be considered " as enemies to His Majesty and to this country."

I ought perhaps to add that I have never stated and I do not conceive, that a change in the public opinion of the country is the ground on which the Cabinet have founded the change in their advice concerning the Soudan.

1222

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

DARMSTADT. *Apl.* 30. 1885.

With respect to your Draft Despatch of April 25, could not both Govts. agree to keep to their own opinion about Penjdeh, and the Russians and Afghans to move further away from each other, so that the Boundary Commission may at once proceed with their work? This would not lower the dignity of either nation.

1223 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

May 2. 1885.

Mr. Gladstone . . . reports that the Cabinet met at a very short notice to consider the answer of Russia to the recent dispatches of Lord Granville,<sup>1</sup> which had arrived early in the afternoon.

Mr. Gladstone understands that Lord Granville will have the honour of seeing Your Majesty tomorrow and of submitting the terms of the answer which the Cabinet advise should be sent to Russia.

Mr. Gladstone therefore will only say that the Cabinet regard the Russian proposal as sufficient and satisfactory, and are prepared to recommend the immediate resumption of proceedings with a view to the delimitation of the frontier.

Mr. Gladstone would in vain seek to find words adequate to express the joy and thankfulness with which he dispatches this communication to Your Majesty on Your Majesty's return home.

<sup>1</sup> Foreign Secretary.

1224

*General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. May 8. 1885.

I reported all that you had said to me on my return here on Wednesday evening when I saw The Queen.

Her Majesty felt satisfied that there would be no check in our preparations for war at present though peace prospects were brighter. . . .

She listened carefully to all I repeated respecting the reporting of the opinions of members of the Cabinet but insisted that most Prime Ministers had fully informed her on the points.

When I told her about Lord Palmerston she said it was true he had never given her this information or if he ever did it had never been very accurate.

Her Majesty still maintains that Lord Melbourne, Sir Robert Peel, Lord John Russell and Lord Beaconsfield always gave her an insight into the opinions of the Ministers.

Although she expressed herself as being rather anxious respecting any controversy on Irish matters she told me she was already aware that serious differences of opinion had arisen in the Cabinet on these questions.

1225

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. May 9. 1885.

. . . She will not recur to the subject of the Soudan—beyond expressing her regret that Lord Wolseley's & Sir E. Baring's advice is not more listened to.—

As regards the Affghan question the Queen thinks all may do well if we continue our preparations & do not give way to all Russia wishes in the boundary Line. . . .

The Queen is sorry to have missed seeing Mr. Gladstone to-day but hopes to do so *perhaps* in London or else later next week.

1226

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. May 18. 1885.

The Queen has to acknowledge several letters from Mr. Gladstone. She wishes 1<sup>st</sup> of all to thank him for the kind way in wh<sup>h</sup> he spoke of her dear daughter,<sup>1</sup> her future son-in-law<sup>2</sup> & his

<sup>1</sup> Princess Beatrice.<sup>2</sup> Prince Henry of Battenberg.

eldest Brother<sup>1</sup> in introducing the subject of the Provision for her—& her satisfaction on hearing this Ev<sup>s</sup> that his Colleagues had concurred in the M<sup>cm</sup> on future Provisions for the Royal family.

There is an expression in Mr. Gladstone's letter on the subject of Irish Legislation w<sup>h</sup> makes the Queen fear that Mr. Gladstone thinks the Queen disapproves of the abolition of the Vice Royalty w<sup>h</sup> she is anxious to correct.

The Queen thinks on the contrary, that an amalgamation of the Govt. of Ireland with England, similar to that of Scotland, w<sup>ld</sup> be far the best. But she fears that it w<sup>ld</sup> be considered a g<sup>t</sup> grievance by the Irish & that the so called Nationalists w<sup>ld</sup> be furious. It might likewise lead to the *demand* for the *constant* residence of some Member of the Royal Family in Ireland, w<sup>h</sup> is *totally* out of the *question*.

The Queen hears that Lord Spencer<sup>a</sup> wished it to be announced at once, but she thinks it is far too grave a question to be decided so quickly & that the feelings & views of the 2 Parties sh<sup>ld</sup> be known before it c<sup>ld</sup> be entertained.

1227

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

23rd May. 1885.

Glad to read determination expressed in your letter to refuse new Russian demands. We should not yield even what Lord Granville calls insignificant points or they will make this pretext for more demands.

1228

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

BALMORAL CASTLE. May 23. 1885.

The Queen acknowledges Mr. Gladstone's letter of the day before yesterday & entirely approves of the firm attitude which the Govt. assumes with respect to the v<sup>y</sup> unsatisfactory & unreasonable demands of Russia. We have, the Queen thinks, gone to the utmost limit of yielding—even insignificant points are of importance as they give the moral effect of giving way—w<sup>h</sup> lowers us & encourages Russia.

The Queen hopes to hear more fully today. Mr. Gladstone may be sure of her support in a course w<sup>h</sup> maintains the dignity & honour as well as the safety of her British & Foreign Empire.

<sup>1</sup> Prince Louis of Battenberg.<sup>a</sup> Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland.



1229 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*(Partly printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 652-5.)

HAWARDEN. 23rd May. 1885.

Mr. Gladstone . . . will now endeavour to give Your Majesty some idea of the shades of opinion existing in the Cabinet with reference to Legislation for Ireland.

It is a task which generally speaking it would be beyond his powers to undertake ; but he is desirous to supply Your Majesty with an outline, though it must be most incomplete, on this occasion, because the subject is one sure to recur after a short time, and likely, as he thinks, to exercise a most important influence, in the coming Parliament on the course of political affairs.

There are 4 great subjects in particular on which Lord Spencer has placed his views before his colleagues during the present session.

1. The Viceroyalty, including Royal Residence.
2. Better provision for the purchase of Land in small parcels or holdings.
3. The questions raised by the approaching expiry of the Crimes Act of 1882.
4. Local Government for Ireland.

The third and fourth of these questions are the most difficult, and are those on which there is a considerable divergence of view. . . .

Mr. Gladstone, for himself, does not feel that he is able to form with entire confidence a strong original opinion on each point of the question ; but subject to this reserve he considers that it is right to drop all the coercive provisions, yet that Lord Spencer is fully entitled to ask from his colleagues that the provisions for greater efficiency of criminal justice should be re-enacted.

A question has also been considered as to the duration of the new Bill. Some Ministers, including Mr. Chamberlain and Sir C. Dilke, have wished that it should be for one year only. Lord Spencer has strongly pressed that it should be at least for two—Mr. Gladstone has a very decided opinion in favour of two years.

The proposal to reenact the non-coercive provisions for two years has, through reciprocal concessions, obtained the adhesion of the entire Cabinet.

It has been held throughout by Mr. Chamberlain and others that Local Government, largely conceived and liberally given, would, on the one hand, very possibly obviate all need for special legislation, and would, on the other, to a great extent take the sting out of such special legislation. Their great and real difficulty has been to agree to special legislation without Local Government, such as they conceive and desire it.

To this vastly important subject Mr. Gladstone now presumes to draw Your Majesty's special attention ; though he feels that the rough and rude sketch which alone he can attempt is totally inadequate to the great and far-reaching issues involved in the question.

Mr. Gladstone does not regard the differences of leaning in the Cabinet in these matters either with surprise or with dismay. Such differences are due to inherent difficulties in the matters themselves, and are to be expected from the action of independent and energetic minds in affairs so complex.

There are more than two forms of opinion which commend themselves to different Ministers with regard to Local Government for Ireland : and there are also different motives which prompt these opinions.

Some may look to conciliating, by any honourable means, the more moderate members of the Home Rule Party (which is known to have the most serious internal divisions) : some to obtaining the support of the Roman Catholic Bishops and Clergy, so as to enlist their marked influence on the side of order and of Union between the Countries : some, of whom Mr. Gladstone is one, may desire a large scheme of local government on its own merits, and apart from the influence it may have upon those bodies, which he feels to be somewhat slipping ground of calculation.

He looks upon the centralisation of governing powers for Ireland in what is known as " Dublin Castle " as being in itself an enormous mischief, of which he is most anxious to get rid. It continually maintains and presents in Ireland the idea of Government as a thing ' foreign ' and not indigenous ; and even good laws are not likely to be loved when the administration of them is not in native hands. It prevents the formation in Ireland of these habits, and of that exercise in the work of public administration, which has been of such inestimable value in England

and Scotland ; and withholds a vent from energies which might in this way be usefully employed. Not to mention that it causes Parliament to be overloaded with business, and renders possible the system of obstruction with its enfeebling and degrading consequences.

On the other side there is the fear that any local organ in Ireland of a comprehensive kind would affect to assume the character of a supreme Parliament. (There is also a fear of Ulster feeling.)

Mr. Gladstone does not undervalue this danger, but he firmly believes that by wise provisions it may be reduced within narrow limits so as to be worth the risking when compared with the benefits in view ; and especially when compared with the far more formidable danger that unduly prolonged resistance to reasonable desires may lead after a time to some surrender dishonourable in itself, void of conciliatory influence, and perhaps really menacing to the supremacy of Parliament, which Mr. Gladstone regards as the one sufficient and indispensable bond of the unity of the Empire against all disintegrating forces. Having said so much of motives and general views, Mr. Gladstone now turns to the two main opinions, or leanings to opinion, in the Cabinet itself.

One of these either allows or (as in the cases of Lord Spencer) strongly desires the establishment of a system of representative county Government in Ireland. . . .

The other view is this.

1. That by authority of Parliament there should be, in addition to the County Boards, a Central Board for all Ireland (and if for Scotland also, or for other portions of the Country, so much the better).

2. That this Board should be essentially of a Municipal not a political character. It would be a Municipality for five millions, a population not exceeding what will probably be soon found within a municipality for London.

3. That like other municipalities it should be in part, and indeed in the main executive and administrative, but also with a power to create bye-laws, and to raise funds, or pledge the public credit, in such modes only as Parliament should provide.

4. Such a body would at once relieve the executive of a great mass of work and responsibility by taking over

(a) the charge of primary, and perhaps in part of intermediate, if not of higher, education. (The last point is one for much consideration.)

(b) of Poor Law Administration.

(c) of Sanitary Administration.

(d) of Public Works of all kinds including Fisheries, and perhaps of other and minor branches.

5. The whole charge of Justice, Police and Prisons would remain with the Executive.

6. It is proposed that this Board should not be elected by the whole Irish people, but by the representative County Boards (as the London Board of Works is by the Parish Vestries) : and also that property should in it and in the County Boards have a representation distinct from numbers.

This plan, in substance, was made known first to Mr. Gladstone by Mr. Chamberlain, some little time back, when he hoped to obtain for it Lord Spencer's approbation. He believes it would receive very large support even among what is termed the Irish party.

It is approved in principle, so far as Mr. Gladstone can judge, by six out of the eight Commons-Ministers.

A plan of this kind, going quite as far, has for many years been desired by Mr. Gladstone, whose wish it is to see Local Government extended not in Ireland only but throughout the United Kingdom to the utmost extent of its capabilities, but dealing with local matters only, and under Parliamentary controul.

In one respect Mr. Gladstone would go beyond what Mr. Chamberlain has proposed. He would certainly give to the Irish Municipalities the administration of the ordinary Police ; reserving however to the Executive paramount powers in the interest of the public safety. Police Administration might in like manner be given to the County Boards, after a term of trial.

On the other hand from motives of prudence as to one party, and of conciliation as to the other, Mr. Gladstone thinks it might be wise to empower the Sovereign by Order in Council in case of public danger to the State to suspend the action of the Central Board by suspending or disposing its President, and provisionally to take over all its functions except those relating to taxation. This is a great and stringent power to be provided for an extreme case, and perhaps to be made subject to re-consideration by Parliament after a term of years.

It has not been found necessary to discuss all these provisions in Cabinet, on account of the preliminary bar. A large number of Ministers, including the Viceroy, were not prepared to agree to the promulgation of any plan involving the principle of an elective Central Board as the policy of the Cabinet.

Mr. Gladstone has troubled Your Majesty at this great and burdensome length because he believes that Your Majesty will hear of the subject again. He earnestly hopes that it may be dealt with in time. It would have the effect of making the Government of Ireland Irish, in the same sense as the Government of England is English, and the Government of Scotland, Scotch. His view is undoubtedly that taken by the two markedly radical Ministers (as well as by others). But he is profoundly convinced that the plan itself is in the highest sense conservative. For its aim is widely yet safely to familiarise the people, through local matters with the arts and responsibilities of governing, and to teach them by daily experience that governing is a business in which they have an interest and a share, not one managed by an agency which they feel to lie outside them, and which they have unhappily been taught to regard as alien. These means, so happily known in England and Scotland, cannot be without some promise of success in Ireland . . .

Mr. Gladstone again humbly apologises for the length to which his letter has run.

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*  
BALMORAL. 24th May. 1885.  
[Telegram] I thank you sincerely for your cordial congratulations.

1230  
[Telegram] I thank you sincerely for your cordial congratulations.

1231  
[Telegram] I thank you sincerely for your cordial congratulations.

BALMORAL. 31st May. 1885.  
I hope you will not give way to pressure from St. Petersburg. You will remember that you told me in your letters, you would take a firm stand on what we laid down as our line and it would be most weak in his rights to these increasing demands. I trust therefore you will induce Lord Kimberley<sup>1</sup> to be firm.

Secretary for India.

1232 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to General Ponsonby*

HAWARDEN, 30th May. 1885.

I agree respectfully and decidedly in the opinion that communications to the Prince of Wales as to matters treated in the Cabinet should be by the immediate authority and under the immediate control of the Sovereign. On the other hand this admission of the Prince, at his time of life, to an interior knowledge of affairs, appears to me very judicious and desirable; and I feel certain that H.R.H. will receive these communications under a full sense of being bound, both towards the Queen, and towards the National interest, to the most careful secrecy.

1233 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 655.)

[Telegram]

7th June. 1885.

. . . Trust you will be very firm about Crimes Bill and on no account give way upon it to the radical members of the Cabinet; and pray be very cautious to say very little or nothing about Local Government.

1234 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 655-8.)

10, DOWNING STREET. June 8. 1885.

Mr. Gladstone has the honour to acknowledge, with his humble duty, Your Majesty's ciphered telegram of yesterday. . . .

The suggestion on which the Cabinet have to deliberate is that  
- act of the Executive should be interposed, in a Clause of  
- ill, as a needful preliminary to the active enforcement of the  
special legislation embodied in the Act.

This proposition has been received with favour not alone by the radical members of the Cabinet, and by Mr. Gladstone, but by the Cabinet at large. If it be set aside, its abandonment will be due, exclusively, so far as has yet appeared, to the opposition of Lord Spencer, to whose character, position, and extraordinary services, everyone must feel a great desire to defer wherever it is possible. . . .

Mr. Gladstone takes this opportunity of humbly suggesting to Your Majesty whether it might not be advisable that H.R.H.

the Prince of Wales should see the letter,<sup>1</sup> sent recently from Hawarden, to which Mr. Gladstone has just referred. It touches matters which may reach far into the future.

On Saturday, when he had the opportunity of conversing with the Prince, he was led to dwell on the real importance of maintaining by every proper means the dignity of the Speaker's office. He ventured on observing that in his opinion the effect would be excellent if some one of the Royal Family were to do the Speaker the honour of appearing at one of the Levees held by the Speaker in the early part of each Session. The Prince appeared to welcome the suggestion and expressed his own willingness to act upon it. He desired Mr. Gladstone to mention the subject to Your Majesty.

Mr. Gladstone is not able to say from recollection whether Royal Princes have in former times attended the Levees of Speakers of the House of Commons. He remembers that the Duke of Wellington regularly did it from year to year.

Mr. Gladstone ought to have mentioned in the earlier part of this letter a point of considerable importance. It is that in what is considered the Whig or moderate section of the House there have been recent indications of great dislike to special legislation, even of a mild character, for Ireland. Any public manifestation of this kind would act very seriously on the position, and probably the views, of certain members of the Cabinet.

### 1235 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

HOUSE OF COMMONS. *June 8-9. 1885.*

Mr. Gladstone reports . . . that Sir M. H. Beach this day made his motion against the Custom and Inland Revenue (Bill), in terms which refuse all the taxes asked by the Government except the large amount to be yielded by the Income Tax. . . .

Sir S. Northcote viewed unfavourably the whole finance of the present Government, and said that Sir M. H. Beach had not proposed a tax upon tea but only used the topic as an illustration. He proposed no substitute but said the Budget could be easily readjusted.

Mr. Gladstone replied and contended that this refusal of taxes, attempted under the existing circumstances, was a course without example in his recollection.

On a division the Government was defeated by 264 to 252.

It had been already understood in the debate that the question was one of life and death for the administration.

**1236** (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

[*Telegram*]

*June 9. 1885.*

Humble duty in consequence of last night's division Mr. Gladstone writes on the part of his colleagues and himself humbly tendering resignation.

**1237** *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[*Telegram*]

[BALMORAL] *9th June. 1885.*

I have received your cipher telegram ; but in order to form judgment on the situation I shall await arrival of your letter. If however you think time presses, I am ready to receive you here at once.

**1238** (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

[*Telegram*]

*June 9. 1885.*

With humble duty I am doubtful whether I can add much to Your Majesty's means of judgment but should my opinion be required I believe I could give it best from hence with opportunity of any needful consultation. Am very desirous to avoid journey to a great distance especially because my time and attention will be so constantly required in proceeding to evacuate rapidly this house after five years without having any other ready to receive me. Believe Your Majesty's presence in the south at some early date will be anxiously desired.

**1239** (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 658.)

• *June 9. 1885.*

Mr. Gladstone presents his humble duty to Your Majesty and, in consequence of the division last night in the House of Commons, by which the House refused to grant supplies necessary to meet War charges that it had sanctioned, he has to report that Your Majesty's servants, assembled in Cabinet today, feel they have no alternative but humbly and dutifully to tender to Your Majesty



their resignation of the offices they have had the honour to hold in the service of Your Majesty.

Mr. Gladstone regrets that it has not been in his power to prepare Your Majesty beforehand for this announcement. The state of the case is this. The strength of the Government in the House of Commons has on every occasion been sufficient to enable them to cope with the two solid and constant elements of hostile action, the Tory and Nationalist Oppositions. But last night there were silently withdrawn, under the pressure of powerful Trades, from the side of the Government, a large number of Liberal members who abstained, while seven voted in the Majority. There was no previous notice, and it was immediately before the division that Mr. Gladstone was apprised for the first time of the likelihood of a defeat.

He proposes to move this afternoon an adjournment of the House till Friday.

1240

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 659-60.)

BALMORAL CASTLE. *June 10. 1885.*

. . . She was certainly much surprised at the result of Sir M. Beach's motion &—also at Mr. Gladstone's making it a vital question for the Govern<sup>t</sup>. She desired Sir H. Ponsonby to acquaint him with her view & the impossibility of her hurrying to Windsor, as well as the gt inconvenience & difficulty of her arriving and staying at Windsor next week.—

The Queen will however accelerate her return as much as she can—& will write again tomorrow m<sup>s</sup>—before she finally accepts the resignation of Mr. Gladstone & his colleagues.—

She is anxious to take time to reflect on the best & safest course to pursue at a moment when affairs are so complicated at home & abroad.

The Queen learns with regret the line taken by the Radical Members of the Govt. with regard to Ireland.

1241 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

10, DOWNING STREET. *June 10. 1885.*

Mr. Gladstone . . . acquaints Your Majesty that he has seen Sir H. Ponsonby and Lord Hartington.

Lord Hartington left him between five and six with the intention of going by this night's train to Balmoral.

They both had a consultation with Lord Granville earlier in the day : and they have at a later hour gone over the points on which as far as they could judge it was likely that Your Majesty might desire explanations or advice from Lord Hartington.

Viewing the probably long reach of Lord Hartington's life into the future, Mr. Gladstone feels that he will probably be more useful in conversation with Your Majesty than one whose ideas may be unconsciously coloured by the limited range of the prospect before him.

Mr. Gladstone has, in consultation with friends, considered of the best mode of disposing of certain vacancies in Orders of Knighthood, and also what names it may be proper to submit, upon an approaching change of Government to Your Majesty for other grants of honour. He will be prepared at the proper moment to submit a moderate list to Your Majesty's gracious judgment.

1242

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

11th June. 1885.

. . . I was surprised at result of opposition to motion and also at your making it a vital question. Will accelerate my return as much as possible. In the event of Lord Salisbury being unwilling to form a Government would you and your colleagues be prepared to remain ? Am anxious to take time to reflect on best and safest course.

1243 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 661.)

[Telegram]

11th June. 1885.

Humble duty. Believe that to treat an attack on Budget by an ex-Cabinet Minister with such breadth of front and after all the previous occurrences otherwise than as a vital question would have been contrary to all precedent, a notable instance in December 1852, and would tend to weaken and lower Parliamentary Government. In answer to Your Majesty's question the refusal to which it refers would obviously change the situation. Your Majesty's intention to return will be gratefully appreciated.

1244

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

11th June. 1885.

Have received your answer to my question this morning. I accept resignation of yourself and colleagues tendered in your letter of the ninth and I have summoned Lord Salisbury. Will write.

1245

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*(Partly printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 662-3.)

BALMORAL CASTLE. June 11. 1885.

The Queen has thought it best to wait for a definite answer as to whether Mr. Gladstone w<sup>ld</sup> be prepared to continue in Office if Lord Salisbury sh<sup>ld</sup> be *unwilling* to form a government, before writing. Have now rec<sup>d</sup> his answer. She has telegraphed at once—to save time accepting his resignation.

While fully appreciating the reason of Mr. Gladstone's state of health precluding his coming here, w<sup>h</sup> she certainly had expected he w<sup>ld</sup> have done—she much regrets his not having at once offered to send a Minister up here to communicate personally with her—and to give her any information she might naturally desire as to the feeling of the Cabinet—in general & as to what led to the defeat of the Govt. as well as to the g<sup>t</sup> divergence of opinion in the Cabinet on Irish affairs.

This w<sup>ld</sup> have shown the public how anxious the Queen was to know evy thing before she acted, instead of allowing it to appear that she was wasting time in Scotland.

The Queen however has now sent for Ld. Salisbury having accepted Mr. Gladstone's resignation, & as soon as she has seen him she will telegraph to Mr. Gladstone the result w<sup>h</sup> ought to reach him in time to make any further statement to Parliament tomorrow.—

With respect to the Queen's return south, she must observe 1<sup>st</sup> that the Railway Authorities, unless *previously* warned do *not* consider it *safe* for her to start without some days notice. 2<sup>ndly</sup> That the Queen is a Lady—nearer 70 than 60—whose health & strength have been most severely taxed during the 48 years of her arduous reign & that she is quite unable to rush about as a younger person & a man could do.—

And lastly—it is extremely inconvenient & unpleasant from

the noise & gt crowds at Windsor during the Ascot Week for her to be there since for 24 years the Queen has carefully avoided being there at that time.

However—if she finds it necessary, the Queen will return early next week to Windsor.—She is not feeling strong & must husband her strength for the fatigues she has before her.

P.S. The Queen has just rec<sup>d</sup> Mr. Gladstone's letter of yesterday—in wh<sup>h</sup> he speaks of Ld. Hartington's coming here—as she had wished. She is much vexed at the confusion there has been about this. She had telegraphed yesterday to Sir Henry Ponsonby saying she still held strongly to seeing Ld. Hartington but when Sir Henry replied that in the event of the Queen's accepting the resignation, Ld. Hartington c<sup>ld</sup> say nothing more than Mr. Gladstone had told her, & that his coming here w<sup>ld</sup> be supposed to be a succession to Office—the Queen *reluctantly* counter-ordered his attendance. But she *very* much regrets not having seen him.

1246

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

12th June. 1885.

Hope you quite understand that you are at liberty to announce to Parliament that I have sent for Lord Salisbury who arrives here this afternoon.

1247 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 664-6.)

June 12. 1885.

Mr. Gladstone acknowledges with his humble duty Your Majesty's letter of the 10th and regrets the personal inconvenience of the present crisis to Your Majesty. Among these must be the enhanced presence of cares and occupations; and Mr. Gladstone will only trouble Your Majesty with two remarks.

He is confident that he could show Your Majesty by a reference to facts that such an attack as that of Monday on the Budget could not have been treated as other than a vital question, without relaxing the principles which determined the responsibility of Ministers and also of political parties, and thus striking a blow at the stability of Parliamentary Government. Whatever may be Mr. Gladstone's leaning, in many or other matters, to popular

ideas, he never has been and never will be knowingly a party to any proceeding which can justly be thus described.

The illustrative cases are not very numerous, for Oppositions, in former times, have not been much in the habit of raising vital issues upon Budgets, and, when it was done by Lord J. Russell in 1841, in 1848, and particularly in 1852, circumstances occurred to which Mr. Gladstone would appeal in support of his views.

With regard to the intentions of Radical members of the Cabinet respecting the Bill proposed for the Government of Ireland, they were never finally declared. It is however undoubted that, when the division of Monday took place, one point remained (not in Mr. Gladstone's view of vital moment) which was still in suspense although, before the Whitsuntide recess, the entire subject had been settled which was accidentally reopened by the proposal as to Land Purchase. But Mr. Gladstone never intimated to Your Majesty that the course of the Cabinet, or his own, was to be governed by the dissent to which Your Majesty refers; and it was his firm intention, had that dissent become operative, to submit for Your Majesty's sanction such arrangements as might have been necessary for filling any vacant office and carrying on the Government.

P.S. Between Monday and this day, Mr. Gladstone had waived any conversation with colleagues on the proposed Irish Bill. From what he has gathered, however, within the last few hours, he thinks it probable that the single point of difference relating to that Bill was in a fair way of settlement.

1248

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 666)

[Telegram]

[12th June. 1885.]

Have seen Lord Salisbury. While he is perfectly ready to form a Government, he wishes you to know that neither he nor his friends are desirous of taking office. They think obstacle to dissolution arising from Reform Bill makes situation of unexampled difficulty which should be brought earnestly before you, before you determine finally that you will not continue. Lord Salisbury leaves here tomorrow about two p.m. I leave here Tuesday morning.

1249 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

10, DOWNING STREET. 13th June. 1885.

Mr. Gladstone acknowledges with his humble duty Your Majesty's gracious letter of the 11th and has only to express his renewed regret at the inconvenience caused by recent occurrences to Your Majesty's personal arrangements, while he is also sorry to hear of the misapprehension which unfortunately occurred respecting Lord Hartington.

On grounds of courtesy Mr. Gladstone would have been happy, with Your Majesty's implied permission, to consult his colleagues on the suggestion of Lord Salisbury that the resignation should be reconsidered. But the situation which has been created by events is so definite that any reference to them would, when coupled with Lord Salisbury's continuing readiness to form a Government, have been a waste of valuable time.

Several weeks before the late decision, Lord Salisbury was understood to make known voluntarily to the world that he was prepared, if summoned by Your Majesty, to take the helm. In presumed concert with him, his political friend, and ex-colleague moved the attack. This attack was a mortal blow at the Budget. No such blow, as far as Mr. Gladstone's knowledge goes, has since the first Reform Bill been struck successfully without entailing the resignation of Ministers. The announcement of this resignation and of its sequel completed the chain of facts known to the world and in itself complete. Upon this basis was founded the telegram in cipher, which Mr. Gladstone despatched this morning to Your Majesty with the hope that it would reach Balmoral so as to enable Your Majesty to communicate upon it with Lord Salisbury before the hour fixed for his departure.

Mr. Gladstone is extremely sorry if Your Majesty has had occasion to miss him on this important occasion at Balmoral. Had he understood Your Majesty to call, for his presence, he would not have failed to obey. But he understood Your Majesty's telegram to be only a gracious permission, and also to depend upon the question whether he believed his going to Balmoral would expedite proceedings. He mentioned the particular reason which in some degree required his presence here, because it did not appear to him that he could render Your Majesty any aid by his,

taking the journey, and because he knew Lord Hartington was fully prepared to wait upon Your Majesty.

### 1250 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

(Partly printed in *Life of Gladstone*, III, 209.)

BALMORAL CASTLE. *June 13. 1885.*

The Queen has just rec<sup>d</sup>: Mr. Gladstone's Telegram—& therefore there will now be no longer any doubt as to Lord Salisbury's undertaking to form a Government.—

Mr. Gladstone mentioned in his last letter but one—his intention of proposing some honours. But before she considers these she wishes to *offer him an Earldom*,—as a *mark* of her *recognition* of his long, & distinguished Services as she believes & *thinks* he will thereby be enabled still to render great service to his Sovereign & Country—which if he retired—as he has repeatedly told her of late, he intended to do shortly he could not.—

The Country w<sup>ld</sup> doubtless be pleased at any signal mark of recognition of Mr. Gladstone's long & eminent career—& the Queen believes that it w<sup>ld</sup> be beneficial to his health,—no longer exposing him to the pressure from without for more active work than he ought to undertake.—

Only the other day—without reference to the present event, the Queen mentioned to Mrs. Gladstone at Windsor, this advantage to Mr. Gladstone's health, of removal from a one House to the other; in w<sup>h</sup> she seemed to agree.

The Queen trusts therefore that Mr. Gladstone will accept the offer of an Earldom, w<sup>h</sup> would be very gratifying to her.—

The Queen will arrive D.V. at Windsor—w<sup>h</sup> causes her considerable personal inconvenience, as she has before mentioned.

### 1251 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Life of Gladstone*, III, 209–10.)

LONDON. *June 14. 1885.*

Mr. Gladstone offers his humble duty to Your Majesty.

It would not be easy for him to describe the feelings with which he has read Your Majesty's generous, most generous letter.

He prizes every word of it, for he is fully alive to all the circumstances which give it value.

It will be a precious possession to him, and to his children after to

him. All, that could recommend an Earldom to him, it already has given him.

He remains however of the belief that he ought not to avail himself of this most gracious offer.

Any service that he can render, if small, will, however, be greater in the House of Commons than in the House of Lords, and it has never formed part of his views to enter that historic chamber, although he does not share the feeling which led Sir R. Peel to put upon record what seemed a perpetual, or almost a perpetual self-denying ordinance for his family.

When the circumstances of the State cease, as he hopes they may ere long, to impose on him any special duty, he will greatly covet that interval between an active career and death, which the profession of politics has always appeared to him especially to require.

There are circumstances connected with the position of his family, which he will not obtrude upon Your Majesty, but which as he conceives recommend, in point of prudence, the personal intention from which he has never swerved.

He might hesitate to act upon the motives to which he has last adverted, grave as they are, did he not feel rooted in the persuasion that the small good he may hope hereafter to effect, can best be prosecuted without the change in his position.

He must beg Your Majesty to supply all that is lacking in his expression from the heart of profound and lasting gratitude.

### 1252 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 608-9.)

10, DOWNING STREET. [June 15. 1885.]

Mr. Gladstone submits, on his retirement from office, for Your Majesty's gracious consideration, the accompanying lists under their separate heads. . . .

The Art Baronetcies appear, as such honours cannot be said to be usual, to require some explanations from Mr. Gladstone.

He has for many years felt it to be matter of regret as well as of anomaly that the grade of Baronet so frequently conferred in the Medical Profession (for example) has not been tendered to any Artist, or not enjoyed by any, since Sir Godfrey Kneller.

When he had first the honour to serve Your Majesty in his present office, he would certainly have submitted the name of Sir E.



Landseer for a Baronetcy, but for the mental calamity which at that time overtook him. A feeling however that the provision for Art in respect of honours was insufficient led him to recommend the Knighthood now enjoyed by Sir John Gilbert, for the first time as (then) a Water Colour Painter.

After much consideration, and with a sense of the difficulties which surround the subject, he determined to consult Sir F. Leighton, and it is after fully ascertaining his views that the two names of Mr. Watts, as the highest representative of the ideal school, and Mr. Millais as the most eminent and famous among those who may be considered types of the realistic school, are humbly submitted to Your Majesty.

Mr. Gladstone felt able to observe to Sir F. Leighton that he could ask him for impartial testimony inasmuch as in the character of President of the Royal Academy, quite apart from his Knighthood, he had a higher distinction than that which it is now proposed to confer on two of his distinguished compeers.

Mr. Gladstone at the same time hazarded a merely personal opinion that, if at a future time Sir F. Leighton should desire a Baronetcy, most Ministers would be well disposed to submit his name.

He entirely withdrew his name from consideration.

Mr. Gladstone certainly felt that it would be too much to ask for three Art Baronetcies from Your Majesty.

Your Majesty is probably aware that the Artists principally named in his letter have enjoyed the honour of being asked to send, and have sent, their portraits to the noted collection of Artist Portraits at Florence. This fact may be found to serve in a certain degree for the mitigation of jealousies.

Mr. Watts is single, and advanced in years.

Mr. Millais has a family, and, as is understood, a large fortune. . . .

### 1253 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

DOWNING STREET. *June 16. 1885.*

Believing that Your Majesty will reach Windsor tomorrow at an early hour, Mr. Gladstone, with his humble duty, apprises Your Majesty that he will await here any commands which Your Majesty may have for his personal attendance at Windsor, or elsewhere.

He hopes that the journey did not too much fatigue Your Majesty.

He has prepared the submissions on retirement for Your Majesty's view, and will present them either at once or when Your Majesty determines that the proper moment has arrived.

1254      *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. *June 17. 1885.*

I am commanded by The Queen to thank you for your letter, the expressions contained in which have much pleased Her Majesty.

The Queen will be glad to see you here tomorrow Thursday June 18.—at three o'clock.

1255      *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. *June 17. 1885.*

The Queen has seen Lord Salisbury today & sends him a paper w<sup>h</sup> he has written here & w<sup>h</sup> she at once sends to Mr. Gladstone hoping that he may be able to agree to what is therein expressed. The Queen w<sup>ld</sup> be glad for as early an answer as is possible. . . .

1256 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

10, DOWNING STREET. *17th June. 1885. 8½ p.m.*

Mr. Gladstone acknowledges with his humble duty Your Majesty's gracious letter, enclosing a letter from Lord Salisbury to Your Majesty.

As Your Majesty desires a prompt reply, and as Mr. Gladstone has had an opportunity of considering the substance of the matters pressed by Lord Salisbury, he answers at once.

At the same time, he would have been glad to have had an opportunity of obtaining advice upon the important question, whether, as Lord Salisbury states, a Dissolution is *impossible*, Mr. Gladstone will only say that this is not his impression.

He has however to say that in the conduct of the necessary business of the country during the remainder of the Session he believes there will be no disposition to embarrass the Government serving Your Majesty.

He does not consider that it would be for the public advantage, from any point of view, to enter into specific pledges on points of

Parliamentary action, with respect to which he is not in possession of all the facts that bear upon them.

He humbly asks leave to regard the assurance which he has above conveyed as a public reply to a public question.

1257 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. *June 18. 1885.*

The Queen has heard from Lord Salisbury that he concurs with you in thinking that the letter to Her Majesty on the subject now under discussion should be treated as having a public character.

1258 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

*June 18. 1885.*

Mr. Gladstone . . . reverts to his letter of last night, and upon the facts before him, having now had the opportunity of consultation to which he then referred, he agrees with Lord Salisbury in the words "it must be accepted now as a fact that Dissolution is impossible."

He prays Your Majesty to consider this supplemental letter as being like the letter of last night a record of a public transaction.

1259 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

*[Probably June 18. 1885.]*

In transmitting, after consultation with the outgoing Ministers, his reply to the proposal laid yesterday before Your Majesty by Lord Salisbury, Mr. Gladstone presumes to submit to Your Majesty a few remarks intended to satisfy Your Majesty that he has done his best, so far as he had a choice, to meet the views of Lord Salisbury.

He has never signified in the course of these communications that it would be unreasonable at the present time to grant special facilities for putting forward necessary business. But by usage and according to reason the concession of these facilities is always accompanied, as he believes, with proper arrangements as to legislative business and for the maintenance of the independent action of the House.

The first requisition of Lord Salisbury places in the hands of the Government all the liberties of the House as to the prosecution of its legislative business. If that requisition were granted, not one

of the measures now on the Order Book of the House could be submitted even once to its judgment except at the pleasure of the Government.

Some of these measures have been introduced by Mr. Gladstone and his colleagues with a strong sense not only of their propriety but of their urgency. Is it within the bounds of reason that they should, not upon debate and after consideration of all the circumstances, but by a preliminary covenant, hand over to others the power of determining whether on any one of them the House should have an opportunity of giving its judgment. . . .

So plain and imperative do these considerations appear to Mr. Gladstone to be that he had hoped their force would at once be admitted by Lord Salisbury and his friends.

At the same time that the legislative powers of the House are thus made to depend absolutely on the Government, Lord Salisbury does not surrender the power either of proceeding with old or of introducing new legislation. Nor could he with propriety, as Mr. Gladstone believes, make such a surrender. But this reservation illustrates the inadmissible inequality in the terms of the proposed covenant, as they bear upon the Administration and the House of Commons respectively.

As the objections to the first of the two demands are insurmountable, and as they form a whole, Mr. Gladstone will not waste Your Majesty's time by a discussion of the second, but will only add a few words upon the reason which is alleged on behalf of those demands, namely that when the Seats Bill shall have been passed a Dissolution will become, and will be for a time, legally impossible.

Whatever might be the weight of this plea, it could not warrant concessions which involve (besides much else) a total sacrifice of the Legislative freedom of the House of Commons. . . .

The points which have here been touched admit of, and indeed require, much further development, but this most imperfect sketch may suffice to show that it is no merely captious spirit which has led Mr. Gladstone with his political associates to declare that they could not accede to the demands of Lord Salisbury without gravely derogating from the rights of the House of Commons, nor, therefore, without failing in a capital point of their duty to Your Majesty.

1260 *General Ponsonby to Mr. E. Hamilton*<sup>1</sup>WINDSOR CASTLE. *June 19. 1885.*

I gave Mrs. Gladstone's letter yesterday to The Queen.

Her Majesty told me that Mr. Gladstone was particularly pleasant to her yesterday. . . .

1261 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria**June 20. 1885.*

Mr. Gladstone with his humble duty tenders to Your Majesty his cordial congratulations on the completion of another year of Your Majesty's happy reign, and the expression of his hope and confidence that the political perplexities of the moment will find such an issue as in no way to mar the brightness of its annals.

1262 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*WINDSOR CASTLE. *June 20. 1885.*

The Queen thanks Mr. Gladstone for his kind words on the occasion of this day—the 48<sup>th</sup> anniversary of her Accession.

Unfortunately the difficulties & labour of her position seem to increase as powers of endurance seem to be less strong to meet them !

1263 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*WINDSOR CASTLE. *June 20. 1885.*

The Queen has rec<sup>d</sup> Mr. Gladstone's letter with regret for he shows no sign of accepting any part of Lord Salisbury's proposals & this can scarcely be considered as an encouragement to the Conservative Party to put their trust implicitly in the assurances of the Government.

Although the Queen has the most perfect faith in Mr. Gladstone's words, it must be remembered that the questions which will arise are so varied that it is impossible to regard a promise of general support as a security against opposition on vital questions.

Would Mr. Gladstone be prepared to assent to the financial Scheme foreshadowed by Lord Salisbury while promising a general support of the Govt. till the new Par<sup>lt</sup> is elected ?

The unusual state of affairs caused by the impossibility of a dissolution, compels the Queen to make *every possible* effort to

<sup>1</sup> Private Secretary to Mr. Gladstone.

bring matters to a satisfactory conclusion ; & it seems to her that if the crisis continues much longer that it may affect the best interests of the Empire, especially as regards the question of the Affghan Frontier which seems to her extremely threatening.

1264 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

*June 20. 1885.*

Mr. Gladstone . . . had the honour to receive between 9½ and 10 this morning a letter from Sir H. Ponsonby written on Your Majesty's behalf and covering a letter from Lord Salisbury to Your Majesty dated June 19.

Mr. Gladstone felt it necessary at once to call for the presence of all his late colleagues who were within reach and they met at 11 when Mr. Gladstone laid before them the letters which have passed.

The conditions which it is deemed necessary by Lord Salisbury to require from Mr. Gladstone are stated with great clearness.

It is matter of the utmost regret to Your Majesty's late advisers and to Mr. Gladstone himself that Lord Salisbury puts aside without a word a portion of Mr. Gladstone's Memorandum, describing the spirit in which the declaration lately made by him would be interpreted and applied. This portion of Mr. Gladstone's Memorandum written on the 18th has received the entire and marked approval of his colleagues and he himself had hoped that here might be found a solution of the existing difficulty.

He is concerned to say for himself, and on the part of all the members of the late Cabinet who have assembled, that it would be contrary to their public duty to compromise the liberties of the House of Commons now by giving the specific pledges which Lord Salisbury requires.

1265 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to General Ponsonby*

*June 23rd. 1885. 9.30 a.m.*

I understand the Queen to be disposed to express her belief that my words are used with sincerity and loyalty and may reasonably be so accepted and to this I can offer no objection but the incessant attempts from the other side to extend them obliges me once more to say that I can in no way be a party to any construction or interpretation placed upon them.

*OPPOSITION, 1885-6*





1266 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to General Ponsonby*

July 15. 1885.

After Her Majesty's great kindness, I am much concerned to find myself under the necessity of forfeiting the honour she has done me by the invitation to Osborne in praying to be excused.

Circumstances long caused me to play with the question of my throat and voice, but yesterday a careful examination was made of the interior symptoms by Dr. Semon in the presence of Sir S. Clarke, and I was laid under a special injunction of silence not in the House of Commons only, but in private life also to the utmost degree to which it can be carried. If this be effectually obeyed regular treatment will be used, and with a sea voyage afterwards it is thought there is a fair chance of recovery. Meantime the inconvenience is local, and has no effect upon health.

I have troubled you with rather a long story to explain the necessity laid upon me, and I beg you to present my humble duty to the Queen and pray her permission to absent myself from a festive and august occasion when I should be as a statue among living people.

1267 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

OSBORNE. July 16. 1885.

. . . I gave your letter to The Queen.

Your simile of being like a statue made Her Majesty smile, but she told me to assure you she was sorry for you and hoped you would carefully attend to your doctor's orders to keep quiet.

1268 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

(Partly printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 695-6.)

BALMORAL CASTLE. Oct. 2. 1885.

The Queen waited till Mr. Gladstone had returned from his Cruise and had established himself at Hawarden to send him the prints of Princess Beatrice & Prince Henry of Battenberg <sup>wh</sup> she does now & <sup>wh</sup> she <sup>w<sup>ld</sup></sup> have given him at Osborne had he been able to come.

She trusts that he is recovering from the hoarseness with which he has been troubled for so many months, & takes this opportunity of expressing a hope that he will spare himself from speaking at public meetings for some time to come.—If Mr. Gladstone finds it absolutely necessary to make any further declaration it w<sup>ld</sup> she thinks, be better to do so in writing, & the Queen feels sure that he might do *great* service by *dissociating* himself *entirely* from the extreme set of visionaries who excite the people's hopes & aspirations by promises of what is impracticable or dangerous.

There are very many persons who are visionary greatly alarmed by the *destructive* doctrines wh<sup>ch</sup> are taught, who w<sup>ld</sup> welcome warmly any words of Mr. Gladstone's which *affirmed* that *liberalism* is *not Socialism* & that *progress* does *not* mean *Revolution*.

~~The Country wants *calming*—*not exciting*—especially before a general election under such v<sup>y</sup> new conditions. The result of wh<sup>ch</sup> causes so much anxiety.~~

The Queen feels sure that she will not appeal in vain to Mr. Gladstone's personal devotion to herself & to his patriotism which she is convinced must be far above Party.

P.S. The Queen finds that Mr. Gladstone has not yet got the Wedding Medal which she accordingly forwards with the prints.

### 1269 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Partly printed in *Life of Gladstone*, III, 199.)

HAWARDEN CASTLE. 5<sup>th</sup> October. 1885.

Mr. Gladstone presents his humble duty to Your Majesty and gratefully acknowledges the letter which he has had the honour to receive this morning.

Although he does not anticipate any necessity for troubling Your Majesty at great length in his reply yet the importance of the matters touched by Your Majesty leads him to postpone for a day or two submitting his humble observations, and he may then have the opportunity of announcing the actual arrival of the Prints and the Medal which Your Majesty has graciously mentioned.

It happened however that this very day he would have had occasion to trouble Your Majesty with a prayer which he will now take the opportunity of submitting.

He has perceived that in various quarters misapprehension

prevails as to the point at which the deliberations of the late Cabinet, on the question of any renewal of, or substitution for, the Crimes Act in Ireland, had arrived when their financial defeat of the 8th of June caused the tender of their resignation.

Mr. Gladstone prays Your Majesty's gracious permission to remove this misapprehension by simply stating that which occurred in the Cabinet at its latest meetings, with reference to this particular question. . . .

1270 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

BALMORAL. *October 9. 1885.*

. . . As soon as I showed The Queen your letter to me which arrived this afternoon Her Majesty desired me to telegraph her permission at once and regretted she had not replied sooner. . . .

1271 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

HAWARDEN. *October 10. 1885.*

Mr. Gladstone submits his humble duty to Your Majesty, and returns his grateful thanks for the Prints, and the Medal, which Your Majesty has graciously presented to him.

Their beauty has been much admired.

Mr. Gladstone also humbly thanks Your Majesty for the permission announced by Sir H. Ponsonby, of which he proposes at once to avail himself.

He has delayed this letter, that Your Majesty might only be troubled once.

1272 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (2) III, 700-3.)

HAWARDEN. *October 10. 1885.*

Mr. Gladstone presents his humble duty to Your Majesty, and will now proceed frankly to offer the best reply, which he can submit within reasonable compass, to Your Majesty's gracious letter of the 2nd of October.

Mr. Gladstone returns his best thanks for Your Majesty's kind suggestion as to public speaking, to which he hopes to conform. He expects to avoid all public speaking until at a later date he is called to Midlothian, nor is he desirous to make additions to the addresses which he has lately issued.

He humbly concurs with Your Majesty, in viewing with dislike what in the days of Sir Robert Peel was universally regarded with misgiving as Socialism, but it is a subject of great concern to him that a disposition to favour it appears to have made considerable way with the two chief political parties in the State.

He trusts also Your Majesty will never find him wanting in the disposition to distinguish between progress and revolution : and even that Your Majesty may have regarded his recent course as in a measure dissociating him from extreme or dangerous views.

In Government the leader of a party has a title, in certain cases, to limit the speech and action of the members of an Administration, who are usually the leading men of the party. But his position when not in office has no such positive title, and it would be difficult, and unusual, for him to act strongly in this sense, except by his own example, and by private representation or remonstrance.

Mr. Chamberlain is known as the most active and efficient representative at this time of what may be termed the left wing of the Liberal party ; and Mr. Gladstone recently thought it would be well to invite him to Hawarden with a view to personal communication, which has now been effected he thinks with advantage.

Mr. Chamberlain is wholly unaware of any communication at this juncture between Your Majesty and Mr. Gladstone.

Mr. Gladstone has deemed it his duty to do all he could at this time towards inducing the entire Liberal party to cooperate in a line of action which entirely corresponds, in his opinion, with Your Majesty's phrase, in being progress without revolution. He has been the more anxious to promote a distinct plan of action, both on account of his own time of life, which naturally enhances the desire for rest together with an anxiety not to leave confusion behind him, and on account of circumstances which recently occurred, having reference to administration in Ireland.

He has endeavoured to look forward, with due reference to either contingency of a Liberal majority or of a Liberal minority at the election ; apart however from exceptional contingencies, and in regard only to what may be termed the ordinary course of domestic politics and legislation.

In his opinion, formed after the communications he has held in different quarters, the Liberal party has before it, open to its

choice, a course of action, useful and effective, but moderate and safe ; which would supply it as a body with ample employment for several years, and which there is no reasonable cause for its not uniting to pursue.

In substance, this course of action corresponds with what Mr. Gladstone has recommended in his Address, pages 12 to 15 (he incloses a copy for facility of reference that his meaning may be clear). As he understands from Mr. Chamberlain, there is one addition which he thinks essential, namely an extension of the powers of local bodies to enable them to take land, even by compulsion, for certain purposes. Mr. Gladstone has done nothing to favour a plan of this kind : but there is some reason to believe that its compass would not be wide, and that it would not offer an insuperable obstacle to the union of the party, and of the leading men, to which he has referred.

Beyond the limits thus defined, there are other questions on which, undoubtedly, the Liberal party would not as a whole be agreed. They are mainly two, the Establishment of the Church, and not only the composition and structure of the House of Lords, but even the existence of a second Chamber. It is impossible not to see that the most serious consequences may ensue to the Liberal party itself, apart from any other consideration, when questions such as these, and extreme views in regard to them, come to be raised. But they are quite excluded from present view, except as matters of sectional or personal opinion ; when they are considered as embracing the abolition of a second Chamber, and of all religious establishments. Even in any more limited form, they enter into no present contemplation ; and anything said by Mr. Gladstone has been said in the calming and not the stimulating sense.

If therefore, in the course of public contingencies, anything should occur to bring the Liberal party into a more prominent position, Mr. Gladstone does not apprehend a political shock from that as from an early cause.

At the same time, as to a less proximate future, Mr. Gladstone's views are somewhat clouded. His faith in the nation and in its institutions is firm, and any error that may be committed, or danger that may be encountered, will, he believes, be kept within bounds. But, in estimating the future, he must take into view the temper, tone, and integrity of both the great political parties,

the condition of each being in his judgment subject to much influence from the condition of the other. He does not feel sure that they are altogether as healthy as they were when, and for many years after, he entered public life.

Mr. Gladstone has answered to Your Majesty's appeal, as a loyal subject, with a freedom which only Your Majesty's wish, being as it is in his estimation a command, would justify. Perhaps indeed, speaking so much of the future, he ought to have made reserves, with which he has dispensed, knowing that Your Majesty will make full allowance for the uncertain and conjectural element attaching to this strain of remark, and will take what he has said as his best, though a poor, contribution towards meeting Your Majesty's just anxiety for the welfare of the realm.

*PRIME MINISTER, 1886*





1273 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

21, CARLTON HOUSE TERRACE. Jan. 31. 1886.

Mr. Gladstone submits his humble duty to Your Majesty and in anticipation of an audience, for the honour of which he hopes tomorrow at Osborne, without any attempt at particulars, which he reserves, he troubles Your Majesty with a few words on the result of his labour thus far in the execution of Your Majesty's commission.

His first duty was to ascertain how far the colleagues with whom he was last associated were available for the peculiar exigency of the present occasion.

He feels justified in stating that the tone of Lord Hartington and one or two other former colleagues, who do not feel able to join personally in his endeavour, is notwithstanding highly satisfactory to him.

On account of a most painful difficulty, the removal of which he is not yet able to announce with confidence,<sup>1</sup> Mr. Gladstone has scarcely entered on the business of making proposals as to particular offices, with the exception of some few which were he thought fit to be treated as special.

They are as follows :

1. Sir Farrer Herschell, late Solicitor General, is humbly recommended by Mr. Gladstone to Your Majesty to be Lord High Chancellor.

2. Mr. Childers, to resume the office he held in 1880 as Minister of War.

3. Earl Sydney to resume his office as Lord Steward.

4. Mr. John Morley to be Chief Secretary for Ireland with a seat in the Cabinet.

5. Mr. Chamberlain will be proposed to Your Majesty for high office but the name of Sir C. Dilke will not be submitted under the circumstances of the present moment.

6. Mr. Arnold Morley, son of Mr. Samuel Morley lately and long M.P. is humbly recommended to be political Secretary to the Treasury.

<sup>1</sup> Sir C. Dilke had been cited as co-respondent in *Crawford v Crawford*.

Mr. Gladstone places these particulars in Your Majesty's hands, humbly referring to what Sir H. Ponsonby will have reported as to the general composition of the Cabinet, and awaiting the time when, if Your Majesty be pleased to confirm his commission tomorrow by graciously permitting him to kiss hands, they can be regularly dealt with.

*1274 (Copy) Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

21, CARLTON HOUSE TERRACE. 1st February. 1886.

Mr. Gladstone humbly prays from Your Majesty liberty to consider in all its main aspects the best mode of settling the Irish question, which in its present posture he deems likely to become more and more menacing to the honour and interests of the Empire. . . .

Perhaps the greatest of the objects in view is to find whether it is possible to find some better and more effective means of maintaining social order in Ireland than the methods of special criminal legislation, commonly called coercion: a method exceedingly weakened in its basis by the events which followed the change of government last June.

Every Minister would be free to pronounce his judgment on the result of the examination, and to govern his course accordingly; and any plan agreed on would in due course be presented humbly to Your Majesty for Your Majesty's sanction if approved.

*1275 (Copy) Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

App<sup>d</sup>: V. R. I.

Feb. 2. [1886.]

First Lord	.	.	.	(C) Mr. Gladstone
Lord Chancellor	.	.	.	(L) Herschell
Secretaries of State				
Home	.	.	.	(C) Childers
Foreign	.	.	.	(L) Rosebery
Colonies	.	.	.	(L) Granville
India	.	.	.	(L) Kimberley (?)
War	.	.	.	(C) C. Bannerman
Admiralty	.	.	.	(L) Spencer <sup>1</sup>
Scotland	.	.	.	(C) Trevelyan

<sup>1</sup> Lord Ripon was eventually appointed First Lord of the Admiralty, Lord Spencer becoming Lord President of the Council.

Local Government Board . (C) Chamberlain  
 Vice-President of Education  
     or Board of Trade . . (C) Mundella<sup>1</sup>  
 Chief Secretary Ireland . (C) John Morley  
 President of Council . . (L) Ripon ?—or Northbrook ?<sup>2</sup>  
 Chancellor of Exchequer . (C) Harcourt.

1276 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) I, 38.)

2nd Feb. 1886.

Mr. Gladstone humbly transmits to Your Majesty a duplicate of the Memorandum, which he had yesterday the honour of placing in Your Majesty's hands at Osborne.

This Memorandum exhibits the fullest extent, and so to speak the outside possible result, of the examination which it is proposed to institute; but, as Mr. Gladstone had yesterday the honour of stating, the ground upon which the Cabinet are asked to unite is more generally to examine into the possibility, on the basis indicated in Mr. Gladstone's Address dated September 18, 1885, of meeting the wants of Ireland and Irish Society by some method safer and more effectual than a recurrence of the method, so heavily damaged by recent events, of special and restrictive criminal legislation. . . .

1277 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

OSBORNE. Feb. 3. 1886.

The Queen returns the List of the proposed Cabinet—of which she has retained a copy. She could have wished that Lord Northbrook who understands India had gone to the India Office, but if this is difficult she will not place much objection in the way of his *very difficult* task. . . .

1278 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) I, 42-3.) .

OSBORNE. Feb. 4. 1886.

The Queen was so hurried yesterday that she had not time to write to Mr. Gladstone as she wished to do—with respect to the Memorandum which he sent her yesterday.

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Mundella was appointed President of the Board of Trade.

<sup>2</sup> See footnote on page 388.

She must say that it is absolutely necessary for Mr. Gladstone to *state explicitly what* his "examination" would lead to—for it would not be right that the Country sh<sup>d</sup> be led step by step, as he himself w<sup>ld</sup> be to approve a measure, which Mr. Gladstone *knows* the Queen cannot approve,—& w<sup>h</sup> has deterred 4 highly respected & influential Cabinet Ministers from joining his Govt.—Mr. Gladstone *must* be aware that the want of explicitness on his part both as regards Ireland & the Church Establishments have produced many of the Complications from w<sup>h</sup> we are suffering now.

He must now let the Country *see* what is likely to occur or else—there w<sup>ld</sup> be no object in turning out Lord Salisbury's Gov<sup>t</sup>.

### 1279 (Copy) Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) I, 43-4.)

LONDON. Feb. 4. 1886.

. . . Mr. Gladstone is not able to reproach himself with a want of explicitness towards Your Majesty, but in the difficult posture of affairs before him there are of necessity many contingencies which he is not able accurately to forecast, as they depend partly on the possession of knowledge respecting South of Ireland which he has not yet been able to set about collecting, and partly in the conduct and views of many persons in various positions, which it will require time to ascertain and much care to weigh.

In his letter of the 3rd Mr. Gladstone humbly apprised Your Majesty that the basis on which he could attempt to form a Cabinet would be with the endeavour to find some other and better method of dealing with the present case of Ireland than the proposed recourse to what is commonly and roughly termed coercion. That is he binds himself to an accurate and full description.

In the brief memorandum he asked, and he fully believed he had obtained liberty to examine, subject to certain conditions an expression of desire from Ireland which he understands to be supported by an overwhelming portion of her representatives. But he has no foregone conclusion that subject. In his own mind he is not prepared to affirm that desire can be complied with—The subject is mixed up with difficult and complex prob-

lems as to land and otherwise : and it is absolutely beyond his power to anticipate the close of an investigation which as yet he has had no power effectually or practically to institute.

He entirely disclaims the idea of leading on the country step by step to a given conclusion, as he has no such conclusion before his own mind to which to lead them, and there is nothing he would so much deprecate as that Your Majesty should through any act of his be taken by surprise.

In order to add all he can to Your Majesty's information, he incloses his address to his constituents in original, which will bind him before the world, and in which he has endeavoured to describe with accuracy and fulness the ground, and the whole ground, which forms the basis of union in the present Cabinet.

Mr. Gladstone hopes to send in a few hours the promised copy of Lord Hartington's letter : to the closing sentence of which he has already called Your Majesty's attention.

1280

*General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

OSBORNE. Feb. 7. 1886.

Queen has heard from good source<sup>1</sup> that German Government, believing that England abandons her energetic policy has countermanded German ironclad proceeding further at present.<sup>2</sup> Italy also hesitates. Determined declaration on the part of England urgently demanded.

1281

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) I, 51-2)

OSBORNE. Feb. 11. 1886.

The Queen thanks Mr. Gladstone for his letter of the 8th enclosing the copy of his letter to the Greek Minister. Surely these words—and the firm tone of Lord Rosebery must convince these reckless & infatuated Greeks that they have nothing to hope from a Liberal Govt.

The Servians are equally if not far more culpable as they attacked Bulgaria without a particle of reason & caused the loss of thousands of innocent lives.

<sup>1</sup> The German Crown Princess.

<sup>2</sup> A German warship was *en route* to Greece, which was threatening war against Turkey.

The Powers *must* prevent a recurrence of such iniquities *merely* prompted by personal motives. To think that in these days such a wicked policy as that Russia is secretly pursuing can be attempted seems incredible! The Telegrams rec<sup>d</sup>: today show the necessity of great *vigilance & firmness* on our part.—

The Queen cannot sufficiently express her *indignation* 'the monstrous riot wh took place the other day in London—wh risked people's lives & was a *momentary* triumph of socialism & disgrace to the Capital.<sup>1</sup>

If steps & very *strong ones* are not *speedily* taken to put these proceedings down, with a high hand, to punish *severely* the *REAL* ringleaders, & to "probe to the bottom" as Mr. Gladstone has promised—the whole affair, the Government will suffer *severely*. The effect abroad is already very humiliating to this Country & that this should take place *just* when a Liberal Radical Government comes in—& so many of Mr. Gladstone's most respected Adherents have refused to join or support him will make a v<sup>y</sup> painful impression.

The Police seem to be greatly to blame.

### 1282 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

OSBORNE. February 14. 1886.

The Queen asks whether it would not be possible to find work for the unemployed by the ordering of some necessary Public Work.

### 1283 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to General Ponsonby*

16th February. 1886.

With reference to the unemployed, I have communicated with the Home Secretary<sup>1</sup> and the President of the Local Government Board,<sup>2</sup> and I send you copy of the Memorandum which Mr. Childers sends me on behalf of both.

There is a very good case, I believe, for the appeal of the Lord Mayor to voluntary aid: but it is to be borne in mind that the bulk of the working classes are (comparatively) not ill but well off, through the cheapness of commodities, especially provisions:

<sup>1</sup> A meeting of unemployed in Trafalgar Square addressed by Mr. John Burns ended in disorder, February 8, 1886.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Childers.

<sup>3</sup> Mr Chamberlain.

to make the State minister to the poor of London at the expense of the nation would be dangerous in principle : and the machinery which puts public works in action is slow and cumbrous, while the established local authorities are armed by the existing law with ample means of finding work for the unemployed.

1284

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) I, 60-1.)

WINDSOR CASTLE. Feb. 16. 1886.

. . . The Queen perceives a great deal of agitation & excitement in Ireland & England with respect to Mr. Gladstone's policy with regard to that unhappy Country.—

Though Mr. Gladstone speaks of " Examination " as the first thing to take place—*no one* on either side will be satisfied unless he states clearly—what " Examination " may *lead to* & how far he is prepared to go. The Queen thinks the Country has a right to expect a direct statement to this effect on the very first opportunity—and she thinks it would not be fair to any one, including herself—if the state of uncertainty continued.—Lord Spencer<sup>1</sup> said to the Queen that there would have to be great concessions, which is a very serious thing.—

The Queen hopes Greece will be advised or rather will yield to the united desire of the great Powers.—

Mr. Gladstone should take an opportunity of publicly condemning the mad course of that Country in going to War—for abroad people still cling to the hope that he will favour the Greeks—and this encourages the Greeks.

Lord Rosebery displays great firmness & tact ; doing remarkably well.

1285 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to General Ponsonby*

27th February. 1886.

After consideration I have not reported to the Queen a question put yesterday in the House of Commons to the Attorney General<sup>2</sup> by a self-confident youth (Mr. Baumann) concerning supposed hissing when the Queen's name was given in due course at a dinner celebrated in honour of the Representatives of Labour in the new House.

<sup>1</sup> Lord President of the Council.<sup>2</sup> Sir Charles Russell.

I acted thus because as a Parliamentary incident it was altogether momentary and trivial.

In itself it appears to have been grossly and ludicrously exaggerated by the *Morning Post*. In the more considerable journals the report did not mention it.

No hissing was heard by the Attorney General or by Lord Hobhouse the Chairman. It has on inquiry, however, been found that, in a portion of the room, there was some hissing; though not enough to be heard in other parts of it. The occurrence of it is a most disagreeable fact though the extent was small. The monstrous magnifying of it is a great offence.

### 1286 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) I, 72-3.)

HOUSE OF COMMONS. *March 5. 1886.*

Mr. Gladstone reports . . . that the debate on the House of Lords has been shorter (terminating before eight) and generally better than could have been anticipated. Mr. Labouchere made a speech of which it is only just to say that while pungent and sometimes grim in sarcasm, it put ably forward from his point of view a grave and serious indictment. Mr. Brodrick, from the Tory side, answered him with readiness, ingenuity and ability. The partisans of each had reason to feel satisfied with the performances of their respective champions. One or two other members spoke. Mr. Gladstone had to explain the view which he took on the part of the Government. It would not, he said be expected from Liberal Governments that they should be satisfied with the action of a persistently Conservative House of Lords, which even Mr. Brodrick had expressed himself desirous to reform. But he could not give promises which he was not prepared to fulfil, and he could not undertake to fulfil the promise conveyed by voting for the Resolution, nor could he by a concurrence in its terms go so far as to pronounce in favour of the abolition of the hereditary principle in the House of Lords.

On a division, the minority was no less than 166 against a majority of 202 only.—The Tory party were thought not to attend in force.



1287

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) I, 73.)BUCKINGHAM PALACE. *March 6. 1886.*

The Queen in thanking Mr. Gladstone for his report of what took place last night in the House of Commons must say that she read it with *deep & unfeigned regret*.

Mr. Gladstone's speech appeared to *support* that wretched Mr. Labouchere's views, while opposing his outrageous resolution, & such expressions from the Prime Minister—the Queen fears will greatly weaken the power of all who are prepared & *determined* to *uphold* the *Constitution*.

The Queen is sorry & surprised that Mr. Gladstone gave her no idea when he saw her barely half an hour before of what was going to take place or of the line he intended to take ; for she would have urged him most strongly to desist from such a course.

1288 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) I, 73-5.)*March 6. 1886.*

Mr. Gladstone . . . is concerned to find Your Majesty has seen cause to be dissatisfied with his speech of last night against Mr. Labouchere's motion.

He is really not aware what more he could have said in defence than he did say. Mr. Brodrick, an able but a young member, was the sole serious antagonist to Mr. Labouchere. He declared that the constitution of the House of Lords required to be altered by a large infusion of Life Peers, and appeared to express a wish that the more unworthy members of that Assembly could be expelled from it. No strong argument was offered for hereditary Peerage by him, although his party have long had the House of Lords for their mainstay. Particularly since the deaths of the Duke of Wellington and Lord Aberdeen, and most of all since the death of the late Lord Derby, the House of Lords has been the vigilant and persistent foe of Liberal measures as well as Liberal Governments. The Liberal party would be untrue, and all its professions, if it could regard with lively satisfaction the present working and composition of a great chamber which more than any other single force resists, postpones and cripples the measures which, in

eleven Parliaments out of thirteen, the constituency has returned it to promote—Mr. Gladstone doubts whether Your Majesty is fully aware of the sharpness of this antagonism; which, in a slight degree, may be estimated from the recent threat of Lord Salisbury with respect to Ireland, and his reference to “a taste of physical force in the background,” which are the words supposed to have been used.

Last night, and on all occasions, Mr. Gladstone has declared his unwillingness to see the hereditary principle excluded from the House of Lords; and has done all he could to postpone an assault which in perhaps a short, perhaps a longer, period may become formidable and to promote that moderation of conduct on the part of the Lords which would really be their best defence.

Mr. Gladstone believes that his own opinions about hereditary Peerages are tolerated by a large part of the Liberal party as the pardonable superstitions of an old man: and he doubts whether they are cordially shared by all or most of the members of the moderate section—there is no more prominent member of that section on the back benches, perhaps, than Mr. Albert Grey.—Last night he was absent, attending the dinner to Lord Hartington: but Mr. Gladstone has learned that he paired in *favour* of Mr. Labouchere's motion.

In cherishing a love of liberty Mr. Gladstone has always desired to cherish also his sympathy with antiquity; and it is matter of grief to him to see that sympathy constantly declining in the Conservative as well as in the Liberal party.

While humbly offering these general remarks Mr. Gladstone as humbly adds that if Your Majesty shall be pleased to point out anything favourable to the House of Lords which he could usefully have said, but omitted to say, he will seek for an early opportunity of redeeming his error.

1289

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

(Partly printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) I, 75-6.)

WINDSOR CASTLE. *March 7. 1886.*

The Queen thanks Mr. Gladstone for his letter recd: last night, & though not prepared to criticise his speech in detail, thinks he will expect some observations in reply to his communication.

She cannot but think that he might with advantage have dwelt on the following points:—

1. The *benefit* derived by the Nation, in possessing a Chamber of the *independent* nature of the House of Lords ;—independent especially, because *unlike* the House of Commons, its Members have *not* to *solicit* their *Seats* at the *hands* of the *people* by holding out promises which are frequently regretted afterwards by those who made them,—

2. The fact that any attack *directed against* the *House of Lords* as *an integral part of the Constitution* cannot fail to affect the *stability* of the *other two*, viz : the *Sovereign* & the *House of Commons*—a consideration wh it strikes the Queen does not seem to have been present to Mr. Gladstone's mind at the time he spoke.

3. The *great importance* (w<sup>h</sup> the Queen is *sure* Mr. Gladstone *must* himself *fully* appreciate) of maintaining a power like the House of Lords in order that it may exercise a legitimate & wholesome check upon the greatly increasing radicalism of the present day.

For this & other like reasons, the Queen cannot but *regret* that Mr. Gladstone sh<sup>ld</sup>, as Prime Minister, have made a Speech w<sup>h</sup> she is afraid may have the effect of encouraging the views shared by those who agree with Mr. Labouchere, and of *increasing* rather than *diminishing* in some minds, that antagonism w<sup>h</sup> Mr. Gladstone acknowledges exists, or is springing up against the House of Lords, & w<sup>h</sup> she *knows* he is so *desirous* of *averting*.

### 1290 (Copy) Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria

(Partly printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) I, 76-7.)

March 8. 1886.

Mr. Gladstone humbly thanks Your Majesty for condescending to suggest the points in which his speech on Mr. Labouchere's motion appeared to be deficient.

He is unfortunately confined to bed with cold and will not be able to attend a Cabinet which he has summoned for this afternoon, nor the House in the evening. But he will freely state what occurs to him with regard to the important subject of Friday's debate.

Mr. Gladstone humbly concurs with Your Majesty in believing it to be important that there should be a Second Chamber so constituted as to bring into play influences in some respects different from those which sway the House of Commons and free from the

embarrassments which may grow out of specific and perhaps hasty pledges.

But this was not desired by Mr. Labouchere's motion, which was aimed, he thinks, entirely not at the existence of a second Chamber but at its composition on the hereditary principle.

Your Majesty's argument might doubtless have been used with great force from the Opposition Bench : but it is hard to convince the Liberal party that a mode of composing the House of Lords, which results in its habitual opposition to Liberal measures, is a beneficial one. In pleading against the sweeping condemnation of the hereditary principle, Mr. Gladstone believes he went as far as was safe from the risk of producing a reaction, and certainly as far as any speaker in the debate even from the Opposition side.

He thinks it probable that the greatest assistance which Radicalism has received in these times, has come from the unwillingness of the Conservative party boldly to profess conservative principles, and their preference in most cases for proclaiming a new creed of Tory democracy, and for tampering very freely indeed with the ideas of plans of Socialism.

But undoubtedly, in his opinion, Radicalism also derives very great strength from the presence of the Irish members in the House of Commons ; so long as they sit there, it is morally certain that they will form a large part of the Radical wing, because of the total opposition of the Tories to their views. Had the Irish Nationalists been absent from the division on Friday, the minority against the House of Lords would have been small, instead of being large and formidable.

And yet, upon a mere suspicion that the Ministers meditate some plan, which would wholly or substantially dismiss the Irish members from Parliament, and without waiting for positive evidence of the fact, Peer after Peer, by letters to the *Times* and by other means, withdraws or threatens withdrawal from the Liberal party, thereby weakening the influence of that party in the House of Lords, which has always been the principal means of mitigating the opposition of that Assembly to the House of Commons.

Mr. Gladstone owns he can far better understand the apparent indisposition of some leading Radicals to deal favourably with the Irish ideas.

But, be that as it may, Mr. Gladstone cannot doubt that the

many blows dealt at the present Government in one shape and another, by those who are reported Liberal Peers, have produced a natural recoil in the growing number of Liberals disposed to support the views of Mr. Labouchere, although even thus the minority of Friday would have been moderate in numbers, but for the powerful accession of the Irish contingent.

1291 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. *March 15. 1886.*

The Queen, who hopes that Mr. Gladstone is now quite restored to health, trusts that on his return to the House of Commons he will take steps for rescinding the resolution on the Royal Parks which surprised, distressed & shocked the Queen.

She thinks also that the new Members of the Govt. should be informed that it is *part of their duty to support & not to oppose* Govt measures.

They evidently do not seem to understand this *now*.

1292 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) I, 84.)

*March 23. 1886.*

Mr. Gladstone . . . mindful of Your Majesty's desire to learn his intentions with regard to any advice to Your Majesty respecting Irish policy, . . . has set forth his views in the form of a Memorandum<sup>1</sup> inclosed herewith, which he humbly commends to Your Majesty's gracious consideration. . . .

He is sorry to trouble Your Majesty with so long a paper.

1293 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) I, 91-2.)

*March 26. 1886.*

. . . Mr. Chamberlain . . . wishes a body to be established, and does not object to calling it a Parliament, but objects to several provisions essentially belonging to the idea of a Legislative Body. He cannot consent to the removal of the Irish Members from Westminster, as he conceives that this would entail an excessive and unsafe amount of delegated power in the hands of the Irish Body.

<sup>1</sup> Partly printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) I, 85-9

Each of these Ministers<sup>1</sup> has definitively requested Mr. Gladstone to convey to Your Majesty the tender of the resignation of their respective offices, which he does with very great regret. He will hold himself in readiness to convey to them Your Majesty's pleasure, and will lose no time in considering the steps to be taken, subject to Your Majesty's sanction, for supplying the vacancies thus to be created.

On reperusal Mr. Gladstone finds his account of Mr. Chamberlain's objections rather meagre. He also took exception to any suspicion of the taxing power of Parliament in Ireland, and was not willing to give to the local body a general controul over Irish Affairs, but only certain enumerated powers, among which, unlike Mr. Trevelyan, he included the police.

Mr. Gladstone before concluding must express his regret that Your Majesty should have been subjected to a somewhat alarming annoyance by the act of an insane person.

1294

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) I, 92=3.)WINDSOR CASTLE. *March 27. 1886.*

The Queen has rec<sup>d</sup>: Mr. Gladstone's report of the Cabinet Council of yesterday & of the resignation of Mr. Chamberlain & Mr. Trevelyan w<sup>h</sup> she will accept.

The Queen cannot deny that she looks forward with anxiety to the further development of a measure which does not appear to command the approval of the Majority of her subjects in the United Kingdom.

The Queen thanks Mr. Gladstone for his kind expressions respecting the incident of Wednesday afternoon. She was only startled for a moment & the half crazy man's intentions were harmless.

1295 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) I, 93.)*March 29. 1886.*

Mr. Gladstone reports . . . that the Cabinet sat to-day and was of opinion that Mr. Gladstone should at once make known his intention to proceed with a plan relating to Irish Land almost

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Trevelyan.

immediately after the plan for Irish Government, probably on the 15th of April.

The Cabinet considered some of the most important points connected with the Irish Government Bill.

They were of opinion that representatives of Ireland should as part of the plan be withdrawn from Westminster, but without shutting the door against the future consideration, should it be found needful, of some method of giving to Ireland a voice in regard to the external relations.

They were also of opinion with regard to dissatisfaction and apprehension subsisting in part of Ulster, that while no plan of separate treatment could at present be proposed, a willingness should be expressed, on the introduction of the scheme, to consider without prejudice any method of exceptional treatment which might be found compatible with considerations of principle and policy.

In closing this report, Mr. Gladstone cannot refrain from tendering his humble acknowledgment to Your Majesty for the communications he has recently received, and for the dispatch with which Your Majesty was graciously pleased to expedite the business attaching to the recent resignations and the new appointments. . . .

1296 *Sir John Cowell<sup>1</sup> to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram] WINDSOR CASTLE. 1st April, 1886.

You are invited to dinner here on Wednesday next seventh inst. and to remain until the following day please reply.

1297 *Mr. Gladstone to Sir John Cowell*

[Telegram]

Humbly pray postponement of gracious invitation the pressure of work upon me until next Monday is such as I can hardly cope with.

1298 *Sir John Cowell to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram] WINDSOR CASTLE. 1st April, 1886.

Your telegram has been laid before the Queen and Her Majesty is very sorry because Wednesday is the only day on which Her Majesty could receive you at present.

<sup>1</sup> Master of the Household.

1299 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

10, DOWNING STREET. 2-3 April. 1886.

Mr. Gladstone humbly stated to Your Majesty that in his belief his late colleagues, Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Trevelyan, desire Your Majesty's gracious permission to state the points of difference between them and their colleagues on the Irish question which emerged in the discussions of the Cabinet and led to their resignation of office. Mr. Gladstone humbly prays that this permission may be given.

1300 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. April 3. 1886.

. . . She gives Mr. Chamberlain & Mr. Trevelyan the permission they desire.

The Queen is sorry but not surprised to hear Mr. Gladstone is overwhelmed & requires rest.

1301 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) I, 98-9)

10, DOWNING STREET, 9th April. 1886.

Mr. Gladstone . . . has to report that all the circumstances of yesterday went strongly to support the observation he lately took upon him to make, with reference to the singular interest and even absorption of the public mind in the Irish question. Large crowds were gathered between Downing Street and Palace Yard in a state of great enthusiasm though by no means all of one mind, and it required the exertions of the Police, mounted and on foot, to secure a rapid passage to the House of Commons and yet not arrest the ordinary traffic. The scene within the House itself, which was remarkable, bore testimony to the same state of feeling.

Mr. Gladstone rose soon after half-past four and spoke until eight in introducing the proposal he had to make respecting Irish Government. The House listened with wonderful patience, and however severe the infliction it would not have been possible materially to shorten the statement, which had to combine a long and complex argument for legislating at all in this particular direction (of the same character as that which he lately had the



honour of submitting to Your Majesty in writing) with a somewhat minute exposition of the numerous and varied provisions of the Bill.

Mr. Gladstone's impression was that the House received the statement as a whole with favour.

Like the House, he was a good deal exhausted, and at the kind instance of his friends he quitted the House for the remainder of the evening after making the necessary arrangements for the course of the debate, which may possibly be continued until Monday.

His voice served him better than he anticipated. . . .

1302

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

(Partly printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) I, 105.)

OSBORNE. April 15. 1886.

The Queen thanks Mr. Gladstone for all his reports, & letters ; and rejoices to hear of the energetic steps wh<sup>h</sup> are to be taken with respect to Greece.

With regard to Mr. Chamberlain's renewed request for permission to state all that passed which led to his resignation—the Queen w<sup>ld</sup> observe, that Mr. Gladstone in his *previous* request did *not* limit the scope of the explanation to be given by Mr. Chamberlain & the Queen consequently granted him *permission through Mr. Gladstone* to refer to *any* matter he thought necessary.

She considers therefore that Mr. Chamberlain the other Eve<sup>e</sup> : did *not exceed* the permission she had granted, though he may have acted contrary to the usage or rules of the House of Commons in referring to subjects wh<sup>h</sup> had not been placed before it.

1303 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to General Ponsonby*

10, DOWNING STREET. Ap. 20. 1886.

I am sorry the Queen should have had trouble about the affair of Mr. Chamberlain's resignation. Her Majesty is, as usual, perfectly accurate. But neither am I, on this occasion, inaccurate.

My request was for a permission to Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Trevelyan to state the points 'on the Irish question' which emerged in the Cabinet "and led to their resignation."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. 1299.

Mr. Chamberlain whose intricate and voluminous explanations are most misleading, did not (neither did Mr. Trevelyan whose conduct however has been most straightforward) resign on the question of Land Purchase, but on the question of Irish Government.

The simplest way of showing this is, that at the time when Mr. Chamberlain resigned the Cabinet had come to no conclusion, had not even been asked to come to a conclusion on any one matter connected with Land Purchase. This is absolutely beyond question, and is decisive. It is true that at a previous Cabinet I had stated my views on Land Purchase from a printed paper. (Mr. Chamberlain had in like manner, in another printed paper, proposed to give £40 m. for Land Purchase on conditions which I will not now describe.) I did this because Mr. Chamberlain had told me that the matter might properly be discussed without reference to the nature of the Irish authority. But in the Cabinet he had changed his mind : and claimed to know what the Irish authority was to be. This claim was a fair one : and in consequence I postponed the whole subject until I could fully explain the Irish authority, and asked my colleagues to think over various points. To my astonishment I received in the evening from the two Ministers letters of resignation, founded on nothing but a first statement of my opinions to the Cabinet ! On my pointing out the absurdity of this proceeding, it was waived.

At the next Cabinet, the decisive one, I began by saying that I was in a condition to propose modifications of the Land which I thought would go far to bridge over any existing difference, but that Irish Government had become the main question, and accordingly we discussed that, and upon that exclusively the points of difference were stated and the resignations took place. Whether in his own mind Mr. Chamberlain resigned partly " in consequence of the production of the scheme of Land Purchase " of course I cannot say. But who ever heard of a Minister resigning in a Cabinet matter on some proceeding of the *Cabinet*, or of resigning on a scheme of which he did not know the points ?

Her Majesty will therefore understand that the resignations submitted through Mr. Gladstone were based upon Irish Government and upon that alone.

For many reasons I avoided following Mr. Chamberlain into his labyrinth of explanation. . . .

1304

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) I, 118-19)

BUCKINGHAM PALACE. May 6. 1886.

The Queen is anxious before leaving for Windsor to repeat to Mr. Gladstone what she tried to express but wh<sup>h</sup> she thinks perhaps she did not do vy clearly—viz : that her silence on the momentous Irish measures which *he* thinks it *his duty* to bring forward—does not imply her *approval* of or *acquiescence* in them.—Like so many of Mr. Gladstone's best friends—& faithful followers—& so many of the best & wisest statesmen, the Queen can *only* see danger to the Empire in the course he is pursuing.

The Queen writes this with pain as she always *wished to be able* to *give* her Prime Minister her *full support*, but it is *impossible* for her to do so, when the Union of the Empire is in danger of disintegration & serious disturbance.

In conclusion she wishes to add that she fully believes that *Mr. Gladstone* is actuated solely with the belief that he is doing what is best not only for Ireland but for the whole Empire.

1305 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) I, 119-20.)

May 7. 1886.

Mr. Gladstone has the honour to acknowledge the receipt of Your Majesty's letter of this day from Buckingham Palace, and he humbly thanks Your Majesty for the gracious recognition of his sincerity of purpose with which it concludes.

Your Majesty was pleased on the 27th of March, in referring to the meeting of the Cabinet on the 26th., to signify the apprehensions with which Your Majesty regarded the Irish measures then proposed, and likewise a doubt whether they were approved by a majority of Your Majesty's subjects.

On the last named point it would be daring on the part of Mr. Gladstone were he yet to hazard an opinion. All that he knows with any certainty is that they are approved by the vast majority of the Liberal party in Great Britain, and this approval is in a high degree enthusiastic. Whether dissentient Liberals combined with those who are not Liberals may form a majority of the nation, or of the constituencies, is of course a different question.

At present Mr. Gladstone thinks the aspect of the House of Commons is less favourable to the measures of the Government than that of the country.

He is painfully sensible both of the weight and of the number of the colleagues whom he has lost. He may, however, observe, with all respect, that there is no statesman among them of the long and dignified experience, of the singularly calm and balanced temper, of Lord Granville,<sup>1</sup> and that, of practical knowledge and experience of Ireland, Lord Spencer<sup>2</sup> has a larger share, than all other living statesmen of all parties put together. Nor can he avoid referring to the prevalent belief that Lord Carverton<sup>3</sup> is not in the same absolute opposition as many others, to the present Irish policy.

Mr. Gladstone is profoundly sensible that he has been acting all along under an immense responsibility. From his point of view, however, the responsibility of the dissentient ex-Ministers is not less but even greater. Time will decide between them. In the meantime it will continue to be as it has been his desire, and to the best of his imperfect powers his studious care, to avoid exaggerating the difficulties of a great controversy by faults of temper, or by carelessness or want of scruple in language in the promotion of a cause where both parties desire to consolidate and strengthen the unity of the Empire, while each is distinctly of opinion that the policy of the other tends to enfeeble and to sap it.

Mr. Gladstone is most humbly sensible of Your Majesty's desire to give an unvarying constitutional support to those who may have the honour to be Your Majesty's advisers, and he fully enters into Your Majesty's expression of pain on this occasion, which nothing, as he trusts, will be done on his part to aggravate.

1306

*General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. May 8. 1886. —

I have given your book<sup>4</sup> to The Queen who desires me to thank you for it. She had been expecting it since her conversation with you. . . .

<sup>1</sup> Colonial Secretary.

<sup>2</sup> Lord President of the Council

<sup>3</sup> Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland in Lord Salisbury's Government

<sup>4</sup> *Henry Bazely, the Oxford Evangelist: a Memoir*, by E. L. Hicks (afterwards Bishop of Lincoln).

1307

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) I, 121-2.)

WINDSOR CASTLE. May 9. 1886.

The Queen feels that the gravity of the situation will explain her saying more on the subject than is her wont.—

Mr. Gladstone in his letter of the 7<sup>th</sup> (for w<sup>h</sup> the Queen thanks him) says that the most experienced of Statesmen & the mass of the people are with him !

This the Queen thinks is due to Mr. Gladstone's own prestige, & to the weight his name carries in the Country, *not* to the *measure* w<sup>h</sup> to the Queen, appears to be censured & condemned almost universally by the press & by an immense number of the thinking & educated Class.

It is *not* a *party* or a *Class* question, but one so deeply affecting the welfare—& strength of the Realm that men of all shades & persuasions have not hesitated—however painful to themselves,—to point out *what* the consequences would be, of so sweeping a measure ! It is an experiment, in w<sup>h</sup> the chance of disaster *outweighs* the likelihood of the good result w<sup>h</sup> may be desired by its promoters.

The Queen can but warn, & recommend further inquiry & study of a problem so complex—that the proposed method of solving it must awaken the gravest doubts & apprehensions.

The Queen has just rec<sup>d</sup>: Mr. Gladstone's letter of the 8<sup>th</sup> for w<sup>h</sup> she thanks him, but fails to see any reason to change what she has said above.

1308 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) I, 122-3.)

COOMBE. May 9. 1886.

. . . He has had the honour to receive Your Majesty's letter of this day and he is deeply sensible of the considerate and gracious manner in which Your Majesty treats a question necessarily painful. It deepens the sorrow with which he finds himself, under the influence of motives which Your Majesty would never wish him to disobey, prosecuting a policy which Your Majesty has not approved.

It would be gross presumption on his part to mistake the mere

strength of his own convictions for certain proof of being right ; and he is well aware that, if he is wrong in this capital matter, all the labours and efforts of a long life cannot save his memory from disgrace.

This can neither repair the mischief, nor console the sufferers.

At no period however of his life, since the popular movement in Ireland took domestic autonomy instead of the Repeal of the Union for its aim, has Mr. Gladstone seen Imperial danger in any form to be involved in it ; although he never has been willing to promote so considerable a change until full Constitutional proof was forthcoming that the measure, which his reason assures him that prudence recommends, is deliberately and decisively desired by the people of Ireland.

If the case shall be proved to be not that the principle is bad, but the faulty manner in which it is applied by the present Bill, then doubtless it will fall to others to frame more perfect measures, and he will have no other desire but to assist them, just as it was his desire in December last to assist Lord Salisbury when he hoped that the late Government were disposed to take the work in hand.

While not undervaluing the fears on the one side, he cannot wholly forego the hope that these proposals, encountered like many others with presages of ruin, may in like manner be found productive of peace and welfare to the country and of honour to Your Majesty's reign.

Mr. Gladstone once more humbly thanks Your Majesty for the gracious letter.

He will send it for perusal to Lord Granville, Lord Spencer, and Lord Rosebery.

1309

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. May 14. 1886.

. . . Mr. Gladstone will have heard of the *wonderfully* loyal & enthusiastic reception the Queen has met with at Liverpool.—All classes vied with each other in receiving their Sovereign with a heartiness which is indescribable—& in spite of vy persistently bad weather.

1310 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) I, 127)

HOUSE OF COMMONS. 14th May. 1886.

Mr. Gladstone thanks Your Majesty for a most interesting notice of the visit to Liverpool.

On the first day he watched the darkening skies of the Metropolis with much misgiving lest the weather in Liverpool should be under kindred influences, and should again, as on the great earlier occasion, break the course of Your Majesty's almost uninterrupted good understanding with the sun and the clouds on occasions of great public ceremonial.

He learned with much concern that the auguries of evil were so fully verified.

It is however matter for cordial rejoicing that the unfavourable circumstances of the weather were more than counteracted by the enthusiasm of the people, and that Your Majesty's resolute courage enabled them to gain their great object in seeing their Sovereign after a long interval.

Mr. Gladstone trusts that Your Majesty may not suffer from exertion and exposure on the present occasion, and that, in every future effort which Your Majesty may make, no like risk may arise. Meantime this visit will once more have demonstrated to Your Majesty how rich is the reward in loyal sympathy and affection, which such exertions never fail to reap.

1311 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

HOUSE OF COMMONS. May 14-15. 1886.

Mr. Gladstone reports . . . that the House of Commons has been occupied during this evening with a debate raised by the Tory party on a motion made by the member for Stockport in favour of a re-imposition of duties on Imports, that is of a return to the doctrines of Protection, which it took the Country a quarter of a century to put down. Some gentlemen made speeches full of reactionary tendency—The Chancellor of the Exchequer<sup>1</sup> resisted the motion in a speech replete alike with humour and with argument : Mr. Stanhope,<sup>2</sup> though his speech gave a certain amount

<sup>1</sup> Sir W. Harcourt.

<sup>2</sup> President of the Board of Trade in Lord Salisbury's Government.

of commendation and countenance to the mover, recommended the mover not to divide upon it. . . .

1312 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) I, 134.)

WINDSOR CASTLE. May 22. 1886.

. . . Although the Queen deplores the use of language that leads to violence, she can scarcely agree with Mr. Gladstone in his comparison between Lord Randolph Churchill & Smith O'Brien. The former (though wrong if he used words tending to a breach of the peace) is only *maintaining* what is *still* the law of the United Kingdom whereas the latter *defied* the Law, & *declared War against the Queen* for which he was *prosecuted & condemned*.

1313 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. May 26. 1886.

The Queen who is very busy and unable to write herself has commanded me to protest in her name against the Speech of the Attorney General<sup>1</sup> which is calculated to excite the evil passion of the multitude by declaring that the opposition to the Irish Government Bill is founded on class differences. Her Majesty considers that such language from a Minister of the Crown is deplorable and may lead to serious results.

Her Majesty cannot admit that wealth and intellect have always been opposed to just popular concessions. Had Lord Chatham no intellect during the American contest or his son on the question of Catholic Emancipation? These are the instances quoted by the Attorney General.

The Queen is aware that many of the opponents of the Irish Government Bill are wealthy men and that they are distinguished for their intelligence but she cannot say, as the Attorney General apparently boasts, that these qualities are wanting in a Government of which Lord Rosebery is a member and Mr. Gladstone is the chief.

1314 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) I, 141-3.)

HOUSE OF COMMONS. June 7-8. 1886. 2 a.m.

Mr. Gladstone . . . reports that Mr. Goschen opened the adjourned debate on this its closing night. His speech did not

<sup>1</sup> Sir Charles Russell.



present any new points of great force and turned a good deal upon details. He ended with an eloquent peroration in a high strain of feeling.

Mr. Parnell followed and after replying to some of his observations entered upon a very careful and skilful statement of his view of the future of Ireland under a domestic Legislative body. He was particularly impressive in the expression of the necessity for keeping within that body every Irishman, and he held that the Protestants would be a most valuable and essential element of the new system. Mr. Gladstone humbly thinks that this speech, quietly delivered, which defies analysis, well deserves Your Majesty's attention.

It contained however an exceptional passage, in which he stated that it was made known to him before the Election that the Conservatives, if they should succeed, would pass a measure of Home Rule with a power to protect Irish manufactures, and a plan of Land Purchase larger than that now before the House. A great sensation was excited by this statement. . . .

Mr. Gladstone closed the debate in a speech of great length. At a quarter past 1 the House divided when the numbers were :

For the Bill	.	.	.	311
Against it	.	.	.	341
				<hr/>
Majority	.	.	.	30
				<hr/>

Even to the last great uncertainty had prevailed : but the group of the undecided, who at the last were from 20 to 30, went almost in a mass against the Bill.

The cheering of the victorious party was rapturous and prolonged. The Irish Nationalists were somewhat excited. But all passed off without much uproar.

Mr. Gladstone moved the adjournment, of the House until Thursday.

The Cabinet meets at twelve tomorrow (Tuesday). Mr. Gladstone has had no reason to change the opinion he has already expressed to Your Majesty as to their probable advice, but it is an opinion only. Lord Granville, it is feared, may be unable to attend.

1315 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*[*Telegram*]

June 8. 1886.

Cabinet this day determined humbly to advise Your Majesty to dissolve this Parliament with which view the business of the Session would be speedily wound up. I write by post.

1316 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) I, 143-4.)

June 8. 1886.

Mr. Gladstone submits his humble duty to Your Majesty and humbly acquaints Your Majesty that the Cabinet met today to consider the defeat sustained at an early hour this morning on the Irish Government Bill; and they determined that it was their duty humbly to advise Your Majesty to dissolve the present Parliament at as early a period as the occasions of public business will allow. As far as Mr. Gladstone can at present judge, this may perhaps be done within the present month.

Among the grounds of this advice have been the evils of prolonged uncertainty upon an absorbing question, the likelihood of aggravated exasperation between sections and parties; the desirableness of maintaining a continuous action for the purpose of keeping Ireland the better in check and maintaining order there, and the obvious fairness of the argument, which has been and may be used without distinction of party, [that] the opinion of the country should be constitutionally taken on a subject which is of vast importance, which was imperfectly before the body of Electors at the last Election, and on which the Ministers of the Crown and the present representatives of the people are at variance.

The members of the Cabinet will observe a strict secrecy on the subject until Your Majesty's gracious answer shall have been received.

The House of Commons stands adjourned until Thursday when they will, doubtless, have an eager hope of receiving information from the Government. . . .

1317

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*[*Telegram*]

8th June. 1886.

. . . Will sanction advice Cabinet to dissolve but think this should be as soon as possible.

1318

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) I, 144-5.)BALMORAL CASTLE. *June 9. 1886.*

The Queen has to acknowledge Mr. Gladstone's regular & full reports of the proceedings in the House of Commons as well as the account of the Cabinet & the advice tendered to her by him & his Colleagues in consequence of the defeat of the Government on the Irish Legislation Bill.

Mr. Gladstone will have rec<sup>d</sup>: the Queen's answer to his Cypher yesterday in wh<sup>h</sup> she sanctioned the proposal of a Dissolution as soon as possible.

Tho' a general Election barely 6 months after the last is not usually a desirable thing—under the present circumstances the Queen is strongly of opinion that any delay w<sup>ld</sup> tend to keep up, & increase excitement & uncertainty not only in Ireland but all over the Empire, wh<sup>h</sup> w<sup>ld</sup> be greatly to be deplored—& the Queen trusts that the Dissolution will take place this month. She is glad to see Mr. Gladstone shares her views on this subject.

The Queen will be back D.V. at Windsor on the 25<sup>th</sup> -but c<sup>ld</sup> hold a Council for the Dissolution any time before that, *here*.

1319

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) I, 149.)BALMORAL CASTLE. *June 20. 1886.*

The Queen has not yet acknowledged Mr. Gladstone's letter saying that he was called by "his Constituents to Scotland"—She is surprised that he sh<sup>ld</sup> visit other places totally unconnected with them,<sup>1</sup> & cannot help regretting that these exciting meetings should take place at a time when as Mr. Gladstone wrote after the Division on the Irish Legislative Bill he was so anxious not to prolong the uncertainty & excitement in the Country & especially in Ireland.

The Queen fears that these unusual Addresses & Speeches at so many stations on Mr. Gladstone's journey—as well as his visit to Glasgow where there are so many Irish of the worst type will not tend to a dispassionate consideration of a measure which so many of Mr. Gladstone's wisest & best friends & supporters feel bound to oppose.

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Gladstone was to speak at Glasgow, Manchester, and Liverpool.

As the Queen wrote, more than a month ago—she believes it is Mr. Gladstone's own personal influence & not the popularity of the Bill wh. lead people to applaud him when he speaks. And she fears that harm will thus be done by preventing a dispassionate consideration of this very important question.

1320

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

BALMORAL. June 20. 1886.

I thank you sincerely for your congratulations on this day.

1321 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) I, 149-50, and *Life of Gladstone*, III, 344-5.)

EDINBURGH. June 22. 1886.

Mr. Gladstone with his humble duty humbly thanks Your Majesty for the gracious and frank letter from Balmoral, which he has this morning had the honour to receive.

He freely owns, in sympathy with Your Majesty, his dislike to the practice of the most recent years, which has obliged him to give way to the pressure of his friends and to agree to address meetings in Glasgow where he is an entire stranger and in South Lancashire on Friday and on Monday with which he has been connected, both by representation and otherwise.

The mere consideration of the great physical efforts thus demanded from a man at his time of life will suffice to show Your Majesty what strong selfish reasons he has for deprecating such arrangements.

But he must state frankly what it is that has induced him thus to yield. It is that since the death of ~~Lord Beaconsfield~~ <sup>Lord Beaconsfield</sup>, in fact since 1880, the Leaders of the Opposition, Lord Salisbury and Lord Iddesleigh (he has not observed the same practice in the case of Sir M. H. Beach), have established a rule of what may be called popular agitation by addressing public meetings from time to time at places with which they were not connected. This method was peculiarly marked in the case of Lord Salisbury as a Peer, and this change on the part of the Leaders of Opposition has induced Mr. Gladstone to deviate on this critical occasion from the rule which he had (he believes) generally or uniformly observed in former years.

He is, as he has previously app

raised Your Majesty, aware of the

immense responsibility he has assumed, and of the severity of just condemnation, which will be pronounced upon him, if he should eventually prove to have been wrong. But Your Majesty will be the first to perceive that, even if it had been possible for him to decline this great contest, it was not possible for him, having entered upon it, to conduct it in a half-hearted manner, or to omit the use of any means requisite in order to place (what he thinks) the true issue before the country.

Should the elections be favourable to the Government, he fears there may be a persistent opposition to encounter.

Should they be unfavourable, and bring about the downfall of the Ministry, he certainly will not enter on any corresponding course without much previous reflection. The ambiguous result would be most unhappy for all parties, and for the Empire at large.

**1322 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria***

HAWARDEN CASTLE. *June 24. 1886.*

. . . Since making known to Your Majesty the engagements he had formed to visit Manchester and Liverpool in connection with the Election, he has heard Your Majesty had suggested, before hearing of these engagements, his attending the Council at Windsor on Saturday. He thinks it probable however that Your Majesty may be disposed to think his necessary participation in great popular meetings and celebrations had better not be placed in such very close connection, in point of time, with the performance of official duty at Windsor. This is his own impression; nor would it be easy for him to perform the two journeys in the midst of so much physical exertion and incessant pressure of business, but he would not mention this difficulty, were it not for the objection to which he has previously referred—Mr. Gladstone will accordingly not be at the Council unless he should be commanded otherwise by Your Majesty.

P.S. Since this letter was written, Mr. Gladstone has received the gracious message dispensing with his attendance.

**1323 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria***

HAWARDEN CASTLE. *July 2. 1886.*

Mr. Gladstone . . . thinks Your Majesty may be interested in receiving such observations as he can offer on the electoral crisis;

though they do not amount to a forecast of the result, and though it is not improbable that even the polls to be taken today may give a more valuable indication than any he can yet supply.

The reports he has received from the Government experts have been on the whole favourable, yet with reserve, and he does not believe the reports on the Tory side to be very sanguine. This seems natural and rational, on account of the number and weight of new elements in the case of a nature difficult to define. . . .

There are on the side of the Government . . . the popular enthusiasm among the Liberal masses which Mr. Gladstone has never seen equalled. But what is the electoral value of enthusiasm against (a) anti-Irish prejudices, (b) the power of rank, station and wealth, (c) the kind of influence exercised by the Established Clergy, previously applied as Mr. Gladstone of course thinks in politics, but resting upon a very solid basis as founded on the generally excellent and devoted work which they do in their parishes. This remains to be proved.

On the other side there is the Whig defection, with the strange and unnatural addition of Mr. Chamberlain and the small Parliamentary force at his command. (Mr. Bright's position is wholly different; he recommends nothing, and until his speech at Birmingham yesterday had abused nobody.) . . .

Mr. Gladstone himself has no skill in these matters, and dare not lay an opinion before Your Majesty on the probable general result. He offers however the following remarks.

1. There is little chance, if any, of a Tory majority in the new Parliament; little therefore of a stable Tory Government, there being very few among the dissentient Liberals in the House of Commons who lean to Toryism.

2. Opinion, taken as a whole, without distinction of parties, seems to point to the likelihood of a majority not very large, whichever way it may be. Such a result could hardly be satisfactory to anyone, as it might point to a prolonged struggle. . . .

Two or three years ago Mr. Gladstone humbly gave his opinion to Your Majesty at Windsor that the time was at hand when the Irish question would overthrow Ministries, dissolve Parliaments, and disturb parties, but need not in any way be dangerous to the Empire.

It might become in a degree dangerous, he thinks, in one of two cases: either a great prolongation of the struggle (the upshot of

which he cannot regard as subject to serious doubt) or the occurrence of foreign complications ; which had so much to do with the deplorable policy of the Pitt Government at the close of the last Century.<sup>1</sup>

These frank and fragmentary observations on the great question of the immediate future will not weigh with Your Majesty for more than they are worth. He will close them with a single remark. It is that, in his judgment, the opinion formed by Lord Carnarvon last summer was the opinion of a truly Conservative statesman ; and that if Mr. Chamberlain be, as many think him, a politician set upon disturbing British politics with a view to fundamental changes in the institutions of this country, he has formed a truer estimate of possible consequences from the course he is now pursuing (consequences which Mr. Gladstone heartily trusts may never arise) and certainly of the tendencies of that course, than either of the parties with which he is in momentary concert.

1324

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) I, 154-5.)

WINDSOR CASTLE. July 4. 1886.

The Queen thanks Mr. Gladstone for his observations on the Electoral Crisis wh<sup>h</sup> she rec<sup>d</sup>: yesterday—as well as for his two previous letters.—

His assumption that the Home Rule Vote in England returned the Conservatives at the last Election & will now return his followers has not been borne out by results. Nor have the Liberal masses supported Mr. Gladstone's policy in any marked manner but have on the contrary apparently voted in large numbers in favour of maintaining the legislative Union with Ireland. Mr. Gladstone will remember that she has expressed this opinion twice before.

The Queen is sorry that Mr. Gladstone repeats the cry against the wealthy & educated classes of the Country which does not appear to rest on any foundation. As regards his complaint that Mr. Bright recommends nothing she must observe that she fears Mr. Gladstone cannot have attentively read his former Colleague's last speech.—

The Queen wishes that Mr. Gladstone w<sup>ld</sup> recognise in his

<sup>1</sup> The outbreak of war in 1793 interrupted Pitt's Irish policy.

Opponents, Liberal & Conservative, the same honesty of purpose wh<sup>h</sup> she w<sup>ld</sup> fain believe actuates him ; viz : the *desire* of *all good* men of *all parties* to *benefit Ireland as well as England* & so *preserve* the *Union* of the Countries though they *differ* as to the *mode* in which they should be effected. It strikes the Queen always that one can only *respect* those who from *conscientious* conviction feel *bound* to separate from those they have hitherto acted with & which must be so painful to their feelings.

### 1325 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) I, 155-6)

HAWARDEN CASTLE. July 8. 1886.

Mr. Gladstone with his humble duty, and with reference to his last letter, humbly points out that it contained no assumption that the Irish Vote would outweigh the Liberal defections, or return a majority for the Government, but rather even the reverse.

It was after writing that letter that Mr. Gladstone completed the perusal of the speech by Mr. Bright, and thus found that the compliment he had desired to pay to that excellent man was, unhappily, not deserved on either point.

Your Majesty will be glad to learn that Mr. Gladstone has expressly and repeatedly recognised, as Your Majesty so justly desires, the same honesty in his opponents as Your Majesty would fain believe actuates him. But these recognitions are lost in the length of his interminable speeches, which it cannot be expected that anyone should read. Mr. Gladstone makes bold to say that he is not *aware* of ever having, for a generation past, impeached the motives of his opponents, whatever descriptions he may on various occasions have felt himself bound to give, from his own point of view, of their acts.

Your Majesty is pleased to regret that Mr. Gladstone should repeat the cry against the wealthy and educated classes of the country.

In what he has said with reference to wealth, rank and station (rather than education) he is of course open to the effective retort that in a country now somewhat fully represented he is condemned by a majority at the polls. On this he will say nothing, but he may observe that many years ago in a literary controversy with Lord



Sherbrooke (which he does not forward as it could hardly be of interest to Your Majesty to examine) he pointed out the singular fact that for a long series of years, on all the greater questions dependent mainly on broad considerations of humanity and justice, wealth, station and rank had been wrong, and the masses had been right.

This is of course wholly distinct from the question whether the masses *are* in point of fact on the side of the Government ; and Mr. Gladstone admits with great sorrow that the singular enthusiasm to which he speaks as matter of fact from personal knowledge, and of which Scotland has given some remarkable indications, is at present confined within a circle which only supplies a minority of voters. The defeat of the Government has now become an unquestionable fact, and cannot be retrieved.

Upon the broader aspects of this defeat, which whether for good or for evil are undoubtedly important, Mr. Gladstone will offer no observation ; but the elections will he thinks be found to present some rather singular features. First, they seem to testify to the absorbing character of the Irish question, which has been in 1886 what Reform was in 1831, though with a different result. Secondly, they seem to exhibit England on one side, with Scotland, Wales and Ireland on the other (but the population of England is over double that of the other three). Thirdly, that there appears to be a decided difference between Northern England as a whole, and Southern England as a whole. Fourthly, that whereas London was under the £10 Franchise, in 1832, and for some time, wholly Whig and Radical, but chiefly Radical, it is now with a wider franchise the centre and heart of Toryism. Lastly, the most singular fact of all appears to be that the Conservatives have been returned in larger numbers by a diminished aggregate of votes ; which may in part however be explained by the necessary diminution of numbers on the Register as the year advances. These observations are general, and the evidence is not yet complete ; but the points appear of sufficient interest to deserve being laid before Your Majesty. The very large abstention of Liberals from voting *may* supply the key to much of the case.

1326 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

[Telegram]

July 20. 1886.

Humble duty Cabinet tender resignation.

1327 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

OSBORNE. July 20th. 1886.

Have received your telegram and will await letter.

1328 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) I, 162-3.)

DOWNING STREET. 20th July. 1886.

Mr. Gladstone . . . reports that the Cabinet met to-day to consider what advice it should tender to Your Majesty in connection with the results of the general Election.

The Cabinet reviewed a number of considerations tending for the most part in the same direction ; but Mr. Gladstone had better state without delay, that they felt no difficulty in arriving at their conclusion, which was that they ought at once humbly to tender their resignations to Your Majesty. This tender it is the purpose of Mr. Gladstone's present letter to convey. Among the grounds, which specially guided the Cabinet to this conclusion, one prominent ground was this. They have regarded the Irish question as deriving a great part of its urgency from its connection with social order ; and social order is a matter which does not brook delay. This view was common to both parties during the late session of Parliament. A House of Commons has now been elected, with respect to which Your Majesty's advisers have a moral certitude that it will not at this juncture vote the measures which they deem to afford the only sufficient and satisfactory method of providing for a solid restoration of social order in Ireland. This being so, it seems to follow that their charge, and its responsibility, should forthwith be transferred to other hands.

It was also thought desirable for the sake of those, who may be their successors in office, that as much time as possible should be given them to choose for themselves the advice which they shall give with regard to this capital subject.

Mr. Gladstone need not detain Your Majesty with further observations.

1329 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) I, 163.)

OSBORNE. July 20. 1886.

The Queen has received Mr. Gladstone's report of the proceedings of the Cabinet held this day & the tender of his resigna-

tion of Office consequent on the result of the recent elections. The Queen will accept this resignation & has at once sent to Lord Salisbury,—but as he is abroad there may be a little delay before any arrangement can be finally decided.

1330 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

OSBORNE. July 25. 1886.

Lord Salisbury has kissed hands as 1<sup>st</sup> Lord of the Treasury.

1331 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

OSBORNE. July 27. 1886.

The Queen has rec<sup>d</sup> Mr. Gladstone's List of honours which he asks her to confer.—

She did not expect so large a List of recommendations for honours after the extensive promotions granted to his followers last year. . . .

1332 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

DOWNING STREET. 28<sup>th</sup> July. 1886.

Mr. Gladstone . . . learns with deep regret that Your Majesty finds the list submitted by him for honours to be excessive.

He thanks Your Majesty for the honours to which Your Majesty has taken no exception beyond a general statement.

He hopes Your Majesty may be disposed to attach weight to the particulars which he now subjoins with respect to the three gentlemen whose cases he might have stated at greater length. . . .

1333 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

DOWNING STREET. 28<sup>th</sup> July. 1886.

Mr. Gladstone thinks Your Majesty may probably expect to hear from him on the lamentable case of Sir C. Dilke,<sup>1</sup> in connection with his position as a member of the Privy Council ; and with his humble duty he offers the following remarks, after taking the best advice in his power to obtain.

He considers that if the verdict lately given in the Divorce Court were with certainty to be taken as closing the legal series of proceedings, it would have been his duty to advise Your Majesty

<sup>1</sup> Crawford v. Crawford was retried, the Queen's Proctor intervening, July 23, 1886.

with respect to the removal of Sir C. Dilke's name from the list of Privy Councillors.

But the question is open, and cannot at once be closed, whether further proceedings may not be taken. They might be so taken on the part of Sir Charles, or at suit of the Attorney General, or at the instance of private parties.

It has appeared to Mr. Gladstone, and to those whom he has consulted, that the removal of Sir C. Dilke's name from the list would be an act calculated to be prejudicial to him in any pending litigation, and that on this account it ought not to be done, until it becomes absolutely or morally certain that no such litigation is to be anticipated.

On this account Mr. Gladstone finds himself precluded from tendering advice to Your Majesty, which he would have felt it his duty at once to tender had the case been mature for action.

In addition to these considerations, which are deemed to be conclusive, there are others which seem to preclude at this juncture of affairs any attempt to close the question by a prosecution for perjury at suit of the Attorney General. Were the Attorney General, who will quit office in a few days, to examine the matter and take steps for instituting a prosecution, the management of that cause would devolve upon his successor, who, in the exercise of his independent judgment, might deem it unwise. It seems therefore that the subject should be left entire for the consideration of the only person really competent to deal with it, and thus the connection between the question of further proceedings and the question of the Privy Council forms another obstacle in the way of any action by Your Majesty's retiring Advisers.

1334

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) I, 169.)

OSBORNE. July 31. 1886.

On the occasion of Mr. Gladstone's visit yesterday the Queen did not like to allude to the circumstances w<sup>h</sup> led to his resignation—but she would wish to say a few words in writing.—

Whatever Mr. Gladstone's personal opinion as to the best means of promoting contentment in, and restoring order to Ireland,—the Country has unequivocally decided against his

plan & the new Government will have to devise some other course—in due time.

Mr. Gladstone when he took Office in Feb: explained to the Queen his intention of “inquiring” as to what c<sup>ld</sup> be done as well as his proposed mode for doing so; upon w<sup>h</sup> the Queen said she feared he w<sup>ld</sup> never carry it—& he replied “It is 49 to one that I shall not carry it.”

This has come true. But what the Queen is now anxious to say is—that she trusts that this being the case, both in & out of Parl<sup>t</sup>, he will do what he can to aid those who will have the difficult task of trying to propose measures w<sup>h</sup> do not present the objections to any of those, calculated to promote Home Rule. She trusts that his sense of patriotism may make him feel that the kindest & wisest thing he can do *for* Ireland is to abstain from encouraging agitation by public Speeches which though not so intended by Mr. Gladstone may nevertheless increase excitement & be construed as supporting the violent proceedings of those who do not hesitate to defy the Law.

1335 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) I, 170-1.)

August 2. 1886.

Mr. Gladstone . . . has to acknowledge Your Majesty's gracious letter of Saturday. His view in February undoubtedly was that the chances were greatly against his immediate success; but that any other plans, either of persistent repression, or of immediate concession, had no chance of success whatever, instead of having a slight one; and could only prolong the controversy, and deteriorate, probably, the terms of the arrangement. His hope once was, that the Conservative Government would act upon the ideas now known to have been entertained by Lord Carnarvon<sup>1</sup>; and were this now to be so, he would gladly see the task remain in their hands. Whatever aid he can give in the promotion of sound and safe measures was and is entirely at their command. He feels however that there ought not to be an undue delay in the production of such measures as the new Government may deem to be sound and safe.

With respect to the maintenance of order, Your Majesty will not have failed to observe that, so far as the facts have yet been

<sup>1</sup> Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland in Lord Salisbury's Government.

opened, it appears to have been broken or endangered only by the Orangemen terming themselves Protestants, under deplorable instigation from this side of the Water. He cherishes the hope that what may be called the public opinion of Ireland generally is more than heretofore enlisted on the side of obedience ; and this notwithstanding that the actual cases of agrarian crime are, he grieves to think, considerably more numerous than they were in January, when repressive measures were announced. But, be this as it may, Your Majesty may rest assured that whatever small influence Mr. Gladstone may possess will always be steadily directed against resort to any method savouring of violence, and towards keeping the settlement of political questions strictly within the lines of Parliamentary and other legitimate discussion.

*OPPOSITION, 1886-92.*





1336

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

BALMORAL CASTLE. *Sept.* 21. 1886.

Mr. Gladstone expressed such admiration of the Prince of Bulgaria's <sup>1</sup> conduct, bravery & ability that the Queen thinks he ought to see the accompanying letters wh. the Queen rec<sup>d</sup>: from his Brother P<sup>ce</sup> Louis of Battenberg wh give a true acc<sup>t</sup> of the horrible treatment the Prince met with from the Czar & Russia, as well alas ! from so many of the Upper Classes & Officers.

The Queen should add that it is a known fact that the Russian Minister had prepared a moderate & conciliatory reply to the P<sup>ce</sup>'s Telegram, wh the Czar tore up & sent the brutal one off, *without* the knowledge of anyone. This audacity of Russia seems daily to increase & ought to be energetically checked.

Please return the letters when done with.—

The Bulgarians are showing g<sup>t</sup> spirit—& will fight for their independence rather than become Slaves of Russia.

1337 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Partly printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) I, 213.)

HAWARDEN CASTLE. *Sept.* 23. 1886.

Mr. Gladstone . . . returns, with his best thanks, the letters which Your Majesty has been pleased so kindly to transmit for his perusal.

These letters appear to Mr. Gladstone to throw a most pleasing light on the character of the writer, and also on the conduct of Prince Alexander in the recent emergencies.

In other respects what they disclose is painful, Mr. Gladstone had not been aware that the taint in the Bulgarian Army, which is so significant and monitory, had been, at least among the officers, of the very extended character, which is here shown.

The conduct of the Emperor of Russia appears to be altogether inexcusable, whether it be referable to a paltry personal aversion, or whether bearing a more formidable interpretation. It indicates a determined disposition to trespass on the liberties

<sup>1</sup> Prince Alexander of Battenberg.

acquired for Bulgaria by his Father, and to disturb the European settlement of the Balkan Peninsula.

Mr. Gladstone earnestly hopes that the unanimity, which has now for some time characterised the sentiments of the British nation on this important question, may long continue. He also wishes, without much present hope, that the policy of France in that quarter were more rational, and more intelligible.

It having been erroneously stated by a foreign reporter, who met Mr. Gladstone at Brussels a month ago, that he had stated the return of Prince Alexander would not be possible, Mr. Gladstone takes the liberty of saying that the reporter entirely misapprehended him. What he said was that the revolution might bring about very formidable results, should opposing parties in Bulgaria have recourse to *voies de fait*.

In Munich Mr. Gladstone was assured that there was a strong popular sentiment in favour of Prince Alexander as he passed through that city. But the Prince prudently remained within the Station.

### 1338 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

[May 22. 1887.]

Mr. Gladstone presents his humble duty to Your Majesty. And though he fears Your Majesty may find it difficult even to glance at the loyal expressions which the anniversaries of 1887<sup>1</sup> are likely to draw forth, he is unable to refrain from adding his voice to the voices of his fellow-subjects. Looking back over the long years of Your Majesty's reign he feels that they have been, with the necessary allowances which our human state requires, years eminently marked by the diffusion of public blessings and that Your Majesty's accession to the Throne has everywhere taught new and happy lessons on the relation between the Sovereign and the nation. He desires to offer his humble prayer that the Almighty may shower His best gifts upon Your Majesty and your illustrious House and continue to afford Your Majesty His effectual aid in discharging the arduous duties He has laid upon You for the promotion of union and concord among so many millions of His creatures and for the increase of the strength and happiness of the Empire.

<sup>1</sup> The Jubilee was celebrated June 20, 1887.

1339 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria**September 24. 1888.*

Mr. Gladstone presents his humble duty to Your Majesty and humbly prays Your Majesty's permission to make public certain passages from letters and a memorandum officially transmitted by him to Your Majesty on April 29, May 1, and May 2, 1882.

Mr. Gladstone has recently published a statement<sup>1</sup> that the question raised by the Government of 1882 with regard to the release of suspects (in the month of May) was absolutely confined to such prisoners among them as were not themselves associated with crime. . . .

Lord Selborne, however, from his own recollection, supported in various degrees and forms by that of six other Members of the Cabinet of 1882, has publicly demurred to Mr. Gladstone's recent allegation.

Lord Selborne concurs with Mr. Gladstone in the prayer that, if Your Majesty shall be so pleased, the passages in these communications to Your Majesty, on which was founded Mr. Gladstone's announcement to the House of Commons,<sup>2</sup> may be made public.

To these passages alone Mr. Gladstone's present humble request refers.

1340 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone**BALMORAL CASTLE. September 30 [1888].*

The Queen has to acknowledge Mr. Gladstone's letter, & is willing to accede to his request that he should be allowed to publish certain passages from letters & a Memorandum sent officially by him to herself in April & May 1882. The Queen desires however to be made acquainted with the letters & Memorandum to which Mr. Gladstone refers.

The Queen further requests that any such publication may be made by Mr. Gladstone in Parliament, & not in any periodical or newspaper.

<sup>1</sup> Speech at Hawarden, August 20, 1888.

<sup>2</sup> On May 2, 1882.

1341 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

September 30. 1888.

Mr. Gladstone presents his humble duty to Your Majesty. He has had the honour to receive this day Your Majesty's gracious letter of the 30th, in which Your Majesty restrains Mr. Gladstone from making use in any newspaper or periodical of the permission therein granted to him. Mr. Gladstone as in duty bound obeys this prohibition, and he also accepts it most willingly.

With respect to Your Majesty's permission to make the requisite disclosures in Parliament, Mr. Gladstone has humbly to observe that he is aware of no precedent for any proceeding of this kind. The question appears to be an historical one between Lord Selborne (as principal) and himself. It is in Mr. Gladstone's view this: whether the declaration made by him in the name of the Ministry on May 2, 1882, with reference to the release of Mr. Parnell and others, was in conformity with the proceedings of the Cabinet: the recent statement of fact in the *Nineteenth Century*<sup>1</sup> being, he conceives, in substance only a repetition of that public announcement. Mr. Gladstone does not remember to have known or heard of any disclosure of the proceedings of a Cabinet before the House, except in immediate relation to current Parliamentary arrangements. Whether the House would assent to a departure from its usages, he cannot say: but he is extremely averse to being responsible for promoting or asking any such departure.

There is another method of proceeding, not mentioned in Your Majesty's letter. Mr. Gladstone might, on his own responsibility, without the intervention of any periodical or other organ, state the case in a tract or letter written for the purpose; which would of course be open to reply. . . .

1342 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

HAWARDEN. Oct. 11. 1888.

Mr. Gladstone presents his humble duty to Your Majesty and not having received Your Majesty's assent to the request contained in his letter of the 30th ult. he cannot but perceive that Your Majesty still finds the subject not free from difficulty. He accordingly begs at once to withdraw the request and will trouble

<sup>1</sup> "Mr. Forster and Ireland." *Nineteenth Century*, September, 1888.

Your Majesty no further. He will be content to stand upon the declaration made by him in the name of the Government on May 2, 1882, and will leave it to any who may be so disposed to question its correctness. He begs humbly to apologise for having trespassed on Your Majesty's time and attention.

1343

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

BALMORAL CASTLE. Oct. 12. 1888.

The Queen has carefully considered Mr. Gladstone's letter of the 30th Sept : regarding the publication of certain documents.

Though unable to concur in the objection raised by Mr. Gladstone to her proposal that he sh<sup>ld</sup> make the requisite disclosures in Parliament, the Queen has no desire to press this point & will so far as she is able meet his wishes as to the method to be adopted.

Mr. Gladstone suggests that he might on his own responsibility without the intervention of any periodical or other organ state the case in a tract or letter written for the purpose.—

The Queen approves of this course provided that the matter published is limited to those passages from letters and a Memorandum officially transmitted by him to the Queen on April 29th May 1st & May 2nd 1882 (referred to in Mr. Gladstone's letter of the 24th Sept :).

This would of course leave Mr. Gladstone at liberty afterwards but not in the same publication, to state any arguments or deductions wh<sup>h</sup> he may draw from such evidence.—

The Queen would further desire that the above mentioned extracts be submitted for her approval before they are made public.

1344 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

HAWARDEN. 16th October. 1888.

Mr. Gladstone . . . has had the honour to receive yesterday Your Majesty's letter of the 12th.

He much regrets that his own letter of the 11th had not reached Balmoral in time to save Your Majesty the trouble of writing.

He makes his humble acknowledgment of the permission which Your Majesty has been graciously pleased to give him. He designs however to leave the matter on the footing described by him on the 11th ; taking into view the relation of that permission,

432                    THE QUEEN AND MR. GLADSTONE                    [1889  
the purpose he had contemplated, and the time which has now  
passed since Lord Selborne's letter was given to the world.

1345                    *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*  
[Telegram]                    OSBORNE. *July 25. 1889.*  
I congratulate you on this your Golden Wedding Day.

1346 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*  
(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) I, 518.)  
16, JAMES STREET. *July 25. 1889.*  
Mr. Gladstone presents his humble duty and gratefully thanks  
Your Majesty for the message which he has had the honour to  
receive this morning.

1347                    *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*  
OSBORNE. *August 16. 1889.*  
The Queen was much touched by Mrs. Gladstone's suggestion  
that she should visit Hawarden and considered eagerly the  
possibility of such a visit. But I am very sorry to say that as  
all her time in Wales is fully engaged<sup>1</sup> and as she could not extend  
her stay, she was reluctantly compelled to give up the idea.  
But Her Majesty thanks you and Mrs. Gladstone very much  
for the kind invitation.

1348                    *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*  
OSBORNE. *January 7. 1890.*  
I am commanded by The Queen to thank you for the copy of  
your article on Lord Melbourne and Lord John Russell.<sup>2</sup>  
It is interesting to Her Majesty to read what you write on the  
political events of the early part of her reign and she was pleased  
with what you say of Lord Melbourne.  
I am glad you have defended the Administration of my Uncle-  
in-law and what you say of him in connection with The Queen  
has touched her. . . .

<sup>1</sup> The Queen visited Sir Theodore Martin at Llangollen.

<sup>2</sup> "The Melbourne Government: its Acts and Persons." *Nineteenth Century*.  
January, 1890.

1349      *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*OSBORNE. *January 10. 1890.*

The Queen commands me to write again to let you know she has been very much interested in your excellent paper on Lord Melbourne and Lord John Russell and thanks you for calling her attention to it. The Queen retains a most affectionate remembrance of Lord Melbourne though she thinks he was not strong as a Minister.

She also retains a grateful recollection of Lord John Russell though she considers his conduct towards Lord Aberdeen in 1853-4 a great blot.

He was rash and not strong but he always behaved loyally to The Queen and she cannot forget how he put down the monstrous attacks and calumnies against her dear Husband and how he defended him in '54.

*PRIME MINISTER, 1892-4.*





1350

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) II, 141)

OSBORNE Aug 12 1892.

Lord Salisbury having placed his resignation in the Queen's hands, which she has accepted with much regret—she now desires to ask Mr. Gladstone if he is prepared to try & form a Ministry to carry on the Government of the Country?

The Queen need scarcely add that she trusts that Mr. Gladstone and his friends will continue to maintain & promote the honour and welfare of her great Empire.

1351

*General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

OSBORNE. August 12. 1892.

I have repeated to The Queen the substance of what you said about Mr. Labouchere<sup>1</sup> but I find that Her Majesty will not change her opinion, that he is not a fit and proper person to be recommended to her for any of the chief offices of the Government or for any appointment which would bring him into personal communication with The Queen as a member of Her Majesty's most honourable Privy Council.

1352 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to General Ponsonby*

[Telegram]

Aug. 13. 1892.

Remembering the wish expressed on Thursday by the Queen as to the Foreign Office and my answer will Her Majesty think proper to signify personal wish to person concerned.<sup>2</sup>

1353 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) II, 142-3)

I, CARLTON GARDENS. Aug. 13 1892.

Mr. Gladstone presents his humble duty to Your Majesty; and, in obedience to Your Majesty's gracious inquiry, and the

<sup>1</sup> The Queen's objections to Mr. Labouchere were founded on his ownership of *Truth*. Mr. Gladstone had informed General Ponsonby of his own "ignorance except from the vaguest report of the nature and character of that Journal," adding that he would make enquiries

<sup>2</sup> Lord Rosebery.

desire it appears to imply, as well as to public duty, he at once humbly accepts the commission to endeavour to form a Ministry competent to carry on the government of the Country.

Mr. Gladstone believes that his friends will unite with him in this work animated by the most earnest desire to maintain and promote the honour and welfare of the Queen's great Empire, its unity, solidity, and strength : although he is of course sensible of the fallibility of his and their judgments, and can claim for them no other authority than that of sincere and tried convictions.

1354 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

OSBORNE. August 14. 1892.

The Queen commands me to express a hope that the name of Lord Ripon will not be submitted to her for the appointment of Secretary of State for India.<sup>1</sup>

1355 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) II, 149.)

August 19. 1892.

Mr. Gladstone . . . reports that the Cabinet assembled at noon this day.

Mr. Gladstone was desirous to call the attention of the Cabinet to the position adopted on behalf of what was lately the Opposition during the debate on the recent vote of want of confidence. This position in outline was that if summoned to take the Government it would be their duty, in justice to the Empire, to Ireland, and to themselves, to deal in a carefully constructed measure with the subject of Irish Government and that such a measure from its necessary magnitude and complexity would have to take precedence of all others : but that for many reasons it must also be attempted to deal effectively with various and important subjects of British legislation. . . .

1356 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

\* (Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) II, 150)

OSBORNE. August 22. 1892.

The Queen sees that Mr. Labouchere has written to his constituents<sup>2</sup> that The Queen objected to his having an appointment

<sup>1</sup> Lord Ripon, Governor-General of India, 1880-4, was appointed Colonial Secretary.

<sup>2</sup> Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) II, 150.

in the new Ministry and asks what steps you intend to take if this matter rises in importance.

It can only have reached Mr. Labouchere through some breach of confidence and though partially correct it is not completely so for it omits to say that Her Majesty did not object to his holding an appointment which would not bring him into personal communication with The Queen on condition that he gave up all connection with the newspaper *Truth*.

1357 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to General Ponsonby*

10, DOWNING STREET. Aug. 22. 1892.

The present condition of my eyesight very much limits my newspaper reading especially in small type and I am obliged to you for referring me to Mr. Labouchere's letter in *The Times*. . . .

I have just had time to address a letter<sup>1</sup> to Mr. Labouchere, of which a copy will be sent to you with this: I do not imagine that it will give him any satisfaction: and the reports which reach me circuitously come to this that he means to be a martyr.

1358 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

OSBORNE. August 24. 1892.

The Queen was much pleased with your letter to Mr. Labouchere which she thinks is excellent.

She asked if it would be published.

I said you would be the best judge of what should be done but I thought a newspaper war would be undignified and undesirable.

1359 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to General Ponsonby*

HAWARDEN CASTLE. CHESHIRE. Aug. 25. 1892.

I have just received Mr. Labouchere's reply and have again replied to him, adhering strictly to my text but without 1. direct mention of Her Majesty.—

I avoid this lest he should make any such mention a ground for putting to me the question, 'did the Queen express an opinion about me,?' and then treating my refusal to reply as an affirmative.

2. I have been reading his *Truth* of Saturday for half an hour—

<sup>1</sup> Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) II, 150-1.

the first time in my life when I have committed such an excess—I think he has overdone his case. . . .

1360 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to General Ponsonby*

HAWARDEN. 25th Aug. 1892.

. . . I am sincerely glad that Acton should have access to the society of the Queen :<sup>1</sup> He is not at all shy, but is as modest as he is learned and requires drawing out.

He knows much of the world without living in it, and has a notable insight into character.

1361 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

OSBORNE. August 27. 1892.

• The Queen commands me to thank you for the trouble you have taken about this Labouchere business.

She is inclined to think that the publication of your letter to Mr. Labouchere is the best thing that could happen.

1362 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

BALMORAL CASTLE. Sept. 3. 1892.

. . . The Queen trusts Mr. Gladstone has not suffered from the accident he met with w<sup>h</sup> might have been serious.<sup>2</sup>

Does not Mr. Gladstone think that *no* ships from Hamburg sh<sup>ld</sup> be allowed to enter any of our ports ? The cholera seems to be so very alarming there, & to have been carried from thence to other parts of Germany & France &c.

1363 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[*Telegram*]

BALMORAL. Sept. 7. 1892.

Cholera so frightful at Hamburg and the very few cases fortunately which have occurred in England being all traceable to that place I think it is imperative to prevent any communication whatever with that port I think no vessel from there ought to be allowed to enter our ports. In Germany it has spread from Hamburg and has come from Russia to the former port.

<sup>1</sup> Lord Acton was appointed Lord-in-waiting to the Queen

<sup>2</sup> Mr Gladstone was trampled and injured by a cow at Hawarden.

1364 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

[Telegram]

Sept. 7. 1892.

. . . Wrote at once Monday to President Local Government Board<sup>1</sup> On receiving reply will write without delay Am not sure law would allow total exclusion.

1365 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

HAWARDEN. 8th Sept. 1892.

Mr. Gladstone presents his humble duty and being now in receipt of full information from the Local Government Board transmits an interesting Memorandum on the subject of the measures at present taken to prevent the arrival of Cholera by importation. . . .

1366 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

BALMORAL CASTLE. Sept. 17. 1892.

In returning this interesting report, the Queen writes to thank Mr. Gladstone for his letter . . . & to say that she hopes the measures taken have really so far succeeded & will succeed in warding off this terrible scourge from our shores.—

The Queen hopes that Mr. Gladstone has now lost all trace of his accident. . . .

1367 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

BARMOUTH. 21 Sept. 1892.

Mr. Gladstone presents his humble duty, and in answer to Your Majesty's most kind inquiry is able to report that he now suffers none but the most trifling inconvenience from his late accident at Hawarden. . . .

1368 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) II, 162.)

BALMORAL CASTLE. Oct. 3. 1892.

. . . The Queen wd wish to observe on this subject of Ireland & Mr. Morley's<sup>2</sup> "favourable account of the peace & order of that

<sup>1</sup> Mr. H. H. Fowler.<sup>2</sup> Chief Secretary.

Country" that this satisfactory state of affairs is the result of six years of firm & just Govt & she cannot but regret that fresh measures sh<sup>ld</sup> be so hastily adopted—which seem uncalled for, & w<sup>h</sup> may encourage the lawless & fresh outbursts of crime.

1369 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

BALMORAL CASTLE. Oct. 6. 1892.

Mr. Gladstone will deeply lament the great Poet's passing away.<sup>1</sup>

He was full of sympathy for the Queen & she mourns him truly. There is no one to succeed him—but the Office sh<sup>ld</sup> not be abolished.

Only a month ago the Queen read *Guinevere* again & thought it so wonderfully beautiful.

1370 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) II, 167.)

HAWARDEN. 7th Oct. 1892.

. . . With reference to Your Majesty's observation on the state of Ireland, and the outward observance of the law, Mr. Gladstone is aware that the causes of that outward observance do not form a subject on which it would be either becoming or advantageous for him to contest the views of Your Majesty, while he is glad to reflect that the fact is one in which all, irrespective of particular opinions in any direction, may rejoice.

Quite apart from the question thus touched upon, and even from the merits of the present Irish controversy, Mr. Gladstone hopes shortly to submit to Your Majesty his impressions with regard to the effects which the prolongation of that controversy has produced and is producing upon the general course of opinion and interior policy in Great Britain.

1371 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

• (Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) II, 168-9.)

[Oct. 9. 1892.]

Mr. Gladstone, with his humble duty, returns his warm acknowledgments for Your Majesty's gracious letter respecting Lord Tennyson.

<sup>1</sup> Lord Tennyson died, October 5, 1892.

Mr. Gladstone earnestly wishes he had more leisure than he can just now hope, and of the mental freedom which it brings, to reflect upon such a death and such a life, and the great and astonishingly pure work which was performed in it.

He has been kindly invited to be a pall-bearer at the funeral : but unhappily his occupations of the moment are so heavy, that he could not spare the two days it would have required.

He supposed himself to be the only person still living and possessed of early recollections of Tennyson, who called upon him about 1837, and impressed him very deeply.

The honour of that visit was due not to any merit or distinction of Mr. Gladstone's, but to a common friendship with Arthur Hallam ; whom Tennyson had so profoundly known and loved at Cambridge ; and who had previously been Mr. Gladstone's closest associate at Eton. Mr. Gladstone is happy in possessing a number of Arthur Hallam's letters.

It occurs to him that, on account of Your Majesty's feelings towards Tennyson, the perusal of these letters might be of interest to Your Majesty. Should this be so, he would do himself the honour to forward them : otherwise he begs Your Majesty not to take the trouble of noticing this proposal, the thought of the moment.

This intercourse with Tennyson, as with all persons outside the political career, has been sadly intermittent : but all intercourse with him was full of interest.

The last occasion when he saw Tennyson was just after Browning's death. Tennyson said to him " I have no doubt he is a great genius ; but " (rather loudly) " I can't read him."

Mr. Gladstone humbly but emphatically concurs in Your Majesty's view of *Guinevere* : with regard to which Sir Francis Doyle, himself a real though not a great poet, said on its publication " If he continues to write like this, he will run Milton hard."

Mr. Gladstone is sure Your Majesty will pardon him for entering into these particulars.

1372 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) II, 170.)

ILAWARDEN. Oct. 10. 1892.

Mr. Gladstone very humbly apprises Your Majesty that he is most sensible of the difficulties attending the new appointment



to the Laureateship; when one man<sup>1</sup> so greatly excels in power, and seems to be barred by other causes.

Mr. Gladstone will take special care to submit to Your Majesty no hasty recommendation.

1373

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

BALMORAL CASTLE. Oct. 12. 1892.

The Queen thanks Mr. Gladstone for his 2 last letters of the 9th & 10th. The first relating to his long acquaintance with the great Poet whom we have just lost & to his intimacy with young Hallam to whose memory that most beautiful Poem *In Memoriam* was written—has interested the Queen very much & she would be very glad to see the letters which Mr. Gladstone mentions. He has done wisely in not attending the mournful service today which is sure to be very affecting.

The Queen is glad to see that Mr. Gladstone does not wish to suggest the abolition of the Office of Poet Laureate as a few have recommended.—

To abolish an Office (& one which is complimentary & encouraging to Literature) because the successor is not equal to the last holder of the Office, would be an argument & a very bad one which would [be] applicable to almost any office!—But the choice will be very difficult.

A Tennyson we may not see again for a Century or—in all his originality—ever again.

1374 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) II, 170.)

HAWARDEN. 13th Oct. 1892.

. . . With reference to the difficult question of the appointment of the Laureateship, he has been making enquiry as to the present health and strength of Mr. Ruskin; who has published a volume of Poems, and who would, he thinks, have been considered by Lord Tennyson as being, like and still more than Carlyle, a poet in prose. He is however as yet doubtful what the report may prove to be. Mr. Gladstone deeply regrets the gravity of the cause which seems to disqualify Mr. Swinburne for the Office.

<sup>1</sup> Mr. A. C. Swinburne.

1375 *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*[*Précis*]HAWARDEN. *October 14, 1892.*

Wrote to Her Majesty with Arthur Hallam's letters, a letter of transmission.

Described Arthur Hallam's room at Eton as next to Dean Wellesley's; the friendship between them, and the difference of ages.

Called attention to the postages marked on the back, prohibitory for the people.

1376 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to General Ponsonby*HAWARDEN CASTLE. *Oct. 20, 1892.*

. . . I fear it will take me time and require much aid, to make a tolerably conscientious recommendation for the Laureateship.

On account of Swinburne's preeminence as Poet, I have been reading a very careful examination of his case. I fear he is *absolutely* impossible. And I must own to have been astounded at the terms in which *The Times* (17th) described his early outrages. It is a sad pity: I have always been deeply impressed by his genius.

1377 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*BALMORAL. *Oct. 21, 1892.*

The Queen says she marvels at your energy being able to undertake a lecture at Oxford.<sup>1</sup>

1378 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*BALMORAL. *October 28, 1892.*

The Queen observes that it is stated the Government intend to release many of those who have been convicted and sentenced to various periods of imprisonment for outrage with dynamite or other explosives which led to the death of unoffending persons or otherwise disturbing the public peace.

The Queen commands me to ask if this is true and if so what precautions will be taken to prevent a recurrence of these outrages.

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Gladstone delivered the Romanes Lecture, *An Academic Sketch*, October 24, 1892.

1379 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) II, 172-5.)

October 28. 1892.

Mr. Gladstone together with his humble duty offers his apology for troubling Your Majesty, in the form of a letter, with a lengthened statement, in no way urgent for the day, but one which he trusts Your Majesty will deign to peruse at such time as may be least inconvenient.

## ENCLOSURE

October 28. 1892.

Mr. Gladstone presents his humble duty to Your Majesty, and offers his apologies for troubling Your Majesty with any remarks on what is commonly termed the political situation. On three previous occasions, when he has been called to assume the largest individual share of responsibility in Your Majesty's Councils, he did not find anything of the kind to be necessary. On those occasions, he, with others, represented one of two great parties in the State (for in January 1886 the Liberal Schism had not been developed), largely, though unequally, represented in all the different orders of the Community—At the present juncture, the views of Your Majesty's actual advisers, although now supported by a majority of the people (to say nothing of the people of the Colonies, and the English-speaking race at large) are hardly at all represented, and as Mr. Gladstone believes are imperfectly known, in the powerful social circles, with which Your Majesty has ordinary personal intercourse.

Mr. Gladstone humbly thinks it may not be inconvenient, on its own grounds, that he should attempt to lay before Your Majesty a representation of those views, not indeed in detail, but in their essential character: and not, as he trusts, in a polemical spirit, but with full and unconditional allowance to opponents of all that he would ask on behalf of friends. He desires, however, to begin with these two observations:

First, that this memorandum is submitted on his own sole responsibility; for he has felt that if he sought the concurrence of his colleagues in its particulars, it might seem as if designed to interfere in some indirect manner with Your Majesty's absolute freedom of action. Whereas its sole object is that the existence of a

certain view, as matter of fact, should be present to the mind of Your Majesty. He does not ask for any conclusion, or any observation, upon that view, from Your Majesty's practised judgement.

Secondly, that his reason for troubling Your Majesty at all is that, in his firm conviction, the controversy between parties as it now stands, raises, and to some extent has already raised, a number of particular issues, and one general issue, reaching very far beyond the question whether Home Rule is or is not to be conferred upon Ireland; and that the raising of those issues is attended with inconvenience, and may even be injurious to the safe and stable working of our Constitution.

They have, indeed, their immediate consequences; as it is feared that they may place the existing ministry in relations of difficulty with the House of Lords. But it is only the prospect of consequences more remote, and longer lived, which leads Mr. Gladstone to deem these fit to be mentioned to Your Majesty.

The leading fact, to which he would point, is in his judgment, a very painful one: it is the widening of the gap, or chasm, in opinion, which more largely than heretofore separates the upper, and more powerful, from the more numerous classes of the Community. Such an estrangement he regards as a very serious mischief.

This evil has been aggravated largely by the prolongation and intensity of the Irish Controversy.

But it began to operate, years before the present Irish Controversy began in 1885-6. There were at least six ducal houses of great wealth and influence, which Mr. Gladstone had known to be reckoned in the Liberal party at former times, and which had completely severed themselves from it, before Irish Home Rule had come to be in any way associated with the popular conception of Liberalism.

But, after Home Rule had been proposed by the Government of 1886, the division of opinion in the Liberal party widened and hardened. Some found in it an occasion, others a cause, for a separation from their former friends, which seemed to become hopeless when the promises made to Ireland in 1886, short of Home Rule, but yet of large breadth and consequence, passed gradually out of view. Further, this body of Liberals believed themselves bound to be habitual and steady supporters of a Tory

Government, and to vote against measures which in some marked cases had received their previous support.

Such was the character of this movement of Liberal dissent, that the supporters of the present Government in the House of Lords cannot be estimated at more than one tenth or one twelfth of that assembly. As regards landed property Mr. Gladstone doubts whether Liberals now hold more than one acre in fifty, taking the three Kingdoms together.

In the upper and propertied classes generally, the majority against them, though not so enormous, is still manifold.

Yet for the first time in our history, we have seen in the recent election, a majority of the House of Commons, not indeed a very large, but also not a very small one, returned against the sense of nearly the entire peerage and landed gentry and of the vast majority of the upper and leisured classes.

On one side then of this gap there has been a large withdrawal from actual and working Liberalism. Has there been any corresponding change, in the opposite direction, on the other side of it ?

On this subject Mr. Gladstone's personal experience has supplied him with considerable information. It cannot be doubted that there has been in the Liberal party, during the last six years, a large development of democratic opinions. The Liberal associations now often term themselves " Liberal and Radical Associations." The moderate Liberal (and by moderate Liberal Mr. Gladstone means such a person as Lord Granville or Lord John Russell) has not quite become, but is becoming, a thing of the past. There is to a large extent not only a readiness, but even a thirst, for conflict with the House of Lords. Mr. Gladstone does not rejoice in this development, and has done nothing knowingly to stimulate it. He believes that its main cause lies in the feverish atmosphere, which has been created by the prolongation and the fierceness of the Home Rule controversy ; just as the fierceness of the Reform Controversy of 1831-2 added immense force to the less developed Liberalism of that day, and might have carried popular opinions even to a dangerous excess, had it not happily been brought to a speedy close.

The farther the present prolongation is extended, the larger will be in Mr. Gladstone's belief the progress of democratic opinion generally both in the bulk of the Liberal party and among

the popular elements of the Tory party, so as to affect in various ways the public policy of the country, and this through the instrumentality of Tory as well as of Liberal Governments, though through the two in different degrees.

Mr. Gladstone makes no undue assumption as to any unbroken continuity of the *present* preponderance ; although it is possible that it might even be greatly enhanced by a conflict, under possible conditions with the House of Lords : he is not speaking, however, of the balance of parties, but of the general movement of the Country. He desires to lay before Your Majesty as a fact this movement of opinion, especially, but not exclusively, within the Liberal party. For the history of the last sixty years seems to show, that in the *direction*, in which the Liberal party moves, it is sooner or later found that the country has also moved.

Considering the great importance which Mr. Gladstone has attached to this growth of "advanced" opinion and to its connection with the Irish Controversy, he feels it but just to offer a single significant illustration. . . .

The answer to all this would probably be that those, who have pressed forward a disturbing measure of Home Rule for Ireland, are responsible for all other disturbing measures engendered by the Controversy. And this would be true, if it were admitted that Home Rule for Ireland is a disturbing measure. In the view of the present Liberal majority it is not. In Mr. Gladstone's view it is the direct opposite. This, however, is matter of opinion, on the one side and on the other. What appears to be matter not of opinion, but of fact, is that many disturbing measures, and disturbing tendencies, have grown and are growing out of the Controversy.

And though Mr. Gladstone is firmly convinced that Home Rule is conservative, he is far from contending that it must of necessity always remain so. Should it, through the length and obstinacy of the struggle, expand into repeal of the old and independent Irish Parliament, it might thus become very far from conservative.

Were it possible so to isolate the Irish Home Rule controversy that, while it was fought out as a separate issue, its continuance should not at all affect the general political situation, England (for it has been England alone which sustains this action) is powerful enough to carry on the controversy for a time in-

definitely long. An Imperial Crisis like that of 1782 would indeed bring it, as it brought the older Irish Controversy, to a speedy but also to a somewhat dishonouring end. In 1829 Ireland compelled the Duke of Wellington's Government to give way to its fears of disturbance, after an obstinate resistance of many years. And Ireland is stronger now than she was then, in herself, and in the support so remarkably received from Scotland and from Wales. But the resisting party is stronger also, not only or mainly in the concentrated action of the upper classes, but because it, too, is based upon a wide franchise, and some amount of undeniably popular support. There is still subsisting in the country a limited remnant of that anti-Irish feeling, which was formerly so intense, and which made it so difficult for Lord Melbourne to carry on his Government. Moreover the Tory party, naturally averse to most of the changes demanded by the Liberals, may as naturally regard the Irish Controversy as a great impediment to those changes, an impediment which operates by absorbing the time and thus weakening the hands of the House of Commons. Nor do they seem to take into account what, in Mr. Gladstone's view, is a fact they might be expected to appreciate: this namely, that, while Home Rule remains unsettled the Irish party must commonly constitute a steady and large addition to the Liberal force in the House of Commons, whereas the settlement may divide their forces, and must in any case largely diminish their ordinarily available voting strength at Westminster. Mr. Gladstone therefore, well aware that his own time is short, does not confidently count upon success in ~~bringing this~~ great Controversy to an early issue at a definite time. This may be, or may not. But he conceives it to have been already demonstrated, by the experience of the last six years, that the longer the struggle is continued, the more the Liberal party will verge towards democratic opinion. And indeed, in the mouths of many, the word democratic has already become a synonym and a substitute for the word Liberal. An early settlement of Irish Home Rule would seem, then, to be the sole likely means of moderating this onward movement of Liberal opinion—at any rate the existence of that movement, and its activity seems to him to have become plain in the eyes of all men.

In order to explain more completely the scope of this memorandum, Mr. Gladstone humbly deems it necessary now to add a

very few words respecting his own views. These words are quite different from what has last been urged: as they have to rest in the main upon his own assertion, and can be valued only by those who believe in his sincerity.

He feels bound, however, to state that in his firm conviction the proposal of Home Rule is a proposal eminently conservative in the highest sense of the term, as tending to the union of the three Countries (whose moral union must surely be allowed to be at the least very imperfect) and to the stability of the Imperial throne and institutions.

He terms the measure conservative in exactly the same sense as he would term the repeal of the Corn Laws conservative, through its promoting the union of classes and giving a just contentment to the people. For twenty years before 1885 Mr. Gladstone had laboured to the best of his abilities to make Ireland contented with the Union as it stands. Her condition has been immensely improved by legislative changes adopted before that date. But they have not made her contented with the Union. She has ceased, however, to ask for its repeal. That is to say she no longer seeks to have an independent Parliament, sovereign in principle. That subject might possibly revive under exasperation; but it is excluded from all present view.

She is solemnly pledged by the voice of her constitutional representatives, to the acceptance of a "Subordinate Parliament" and to leave untouched the main and central aim of the Act of Union, which was to establish a single, instead of a dual, supreme authority. But, within the bounds thus established, she submits her prayer with an unvarying constancy, and in a perfect confidence that it must eventually, and may soon, be granted.

To a measure of this kind Mr. Gladstone made favourable reference in the House of Commons on the 9th February 1882, and especially in his letter to Your Majesty on the 13th of the same month.<sup>1</sup> But he always anticipated grave evils (which have now actually arisen) from a great party conflict on the subject. In consequence of this anticipation, before the close of 1885, when it was more or less believed out of doors that the Government of Lord Salisbury intended to make a proposal in the sense of Home Rule, he took upon himself the very serious



responsibility of writing to offer them his support. And at no time has he written or spoken of Home Rule as a measure favourable to the Liberal party, except in so far as strength is to be derived (while it is perhaps oftener lost) from the promotion of a just cause, or a cause believed to be just.

Mr. Gladstone does not shut his eyes to the breadth of the allegations which are made, especially by those termed Liberal Unionists, on the other side. That the proposal of Home Rule destroys the Act of Union; that two millions of the Irish are opposed to it; that the assertions of the Irish people and their members cannot be believed; that they cannot safely be trusted with the same liberties as the people of Great Britain, but can only be ruled by the strong hand; each and all of these assertions are indeed not only weighty, but resistless, if they be true.

But it is not the object of this memorandum to discuss contested assertions at all. Its object is to point out dangers and mischiefs tied on, as it were, to the prolongation of the Home Rule conflict. And these not only as they palpably exist at the moment, but as their increase is discernible in that progressive movement of the future, which it seems to be the special duty of an adviser of the Crown, and not least of a very old adviser of the Crown, to forecast according to the best of his ability.

Nor would Mr. Gladstone willingly be responsible for the omission to offer such a forecast, where the gravity of the case may seem imperatively to require it of him. Such considerations will, he believes, secure an indulgent appreciation of the motive with which he has taken upon himself, not to make any appeal to Your Majesty in the hope or anticipation of reply but to lay these lengthened remarks at the foot of Your Majesty, and simply to submit them to Your Majesty's long experience and high discernment.

1380 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

Oct. 31. 1892.

Mr. Gladstone with his humble duty proceeds to reply to Your Majesty's inquiry through Sir H. Ponsonby with respect to a statement that the Government intend to release many of the dynamitard prisoners, which has met Your Majesty's observation. The statement, as so often happens, is absolutely worthless, and due either to imagination or malice. . . .

1381 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to General Ponsonby*

DOWNING STREET. Nov. 2. 1892.

. . . The question<sup>1</sup> has brought to my acquaintance a junior poet named William Watson, who is certainly of very distinguished ability. In the *Illustrated London News* of some ten or fourteen days back there was published a monody of his on Tennyson, by far, very far the best thing I have seen on the occasion.

1382 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) II, 176.)

4th Nov. 1892.

. . . Mr. Gladstone does not at present see his way to making an unexceptionable recommendation for filling the Office of Poet Laureate. He has found much instructive information in connection with the history of the office. Could there always be at hand a great poet, such as Wordsworth or Tennyson, beyond competition, and almost beyond criticism, the path would lie open and easy. But the case appears to have been this, that in the absence of these conspicuous and unassailable claims the person appointed becomes the object of envy, sarcasm, and ridicule; and further that what is intended perhaps only to strike the holder of the office disparages the office itself - when it was refused by Scott this was certainly not from want of personal attachment to the Throne, but more probably because he felt himself to be open as a Poet to a comparison with others, and especially with Byron, whom he believed to be better poets, or poets more approved, than himself.

Mr. Gladstone will however continue to weigh and sift the subject.

1383 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

BALMORAL, November 7. 1892.

The Queen has no objection to your communicating matters of importance, which may have been decided at the Meetings of the Cabinet, to the Prince of Wales, as you did when you were last Prime Minister.

<sup>1</sup> Of the Poet Laureate.

1384

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) II, 181-2.)

BALMORAL CASTLE. Nov. 16. 1892.

The Queen . . . has to say that she certainly would wish to see the List of Bills in preparation. The Queen can well understand the difficulty of drafting a bill for the Govt. of Ireland which involves an alteration in the Constitution of the United Kingdom, & of course until the provisions are made known, the expression "Home Rule" has an empty meaning & the Queen has consequently found it impossible to follow the argument used in the Mem<sup>m</sup> of the 28<sup>th</sup> Oct.—In that Mem<sup>m</sup> Mr. Gladstone assumes that the majority of the people support his views, without knowing what these are, & he also seems to condemn the powerful social circle, to whom his views are im-  
perfectly known for opposing him in their ignorance.—

He surely cannot mean that all are bound to support his policy without knowing the details of the measures, which, if the Queen rightly reads his Memorandum, is a conservative one, *not* destroying the Act of Union.—

Mr. Gladstone also states that it is alleged, the assertion of the Irish people cannot be believed. The Queen, on the other hand, understood that the repeated declarations made by many of the Leaders of popular opinion across the Channel, declarations which were believed here, implied that "Home Rule" was *only* a *stepping stone* to *Separation*.—

As to whether the Irish people can be trusted with the same liberties as the people of Great Britain it is useless to discuss, as it is a question on which opinions differ so widely. Judging however from newspaper reports which the Queen is compelled to do—not having received any information from her Ministers, she feels bound to own that the recent proceedings in the "Evicted Tenants' Commission Court" in Dublin lead her to doubt whether those who might find themselves in future opposed to the policy of a purely Irish Government could rely on that impartial hearing of their appeals, which has hitherto given confidence to the Queen's subjects & encouraged them to depend on the proverbial "fair play" of an Englishman.

1885-1 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Partly printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) II, 182-4.)

10, DOWNING STREET. 18th Nov. 1892.

Mr. Gladstone presents his humble duty, and acknowledges Your Majesty's gracious letter of the 16th which has had his immediate attention.

The Cabinet meets on Monday, and he hopes then to be in a condition to transmit to Your Majesty a list of Bills in preparation under its directions. It will be subject however to the following observation; that, at so early a period, it rarely happens that so much has been done towards shaping the work of the next session, and that the list in its present form will not be one altogether final, as circumstances may occur exhibiting a need for other measures, or on the other hand showing more exactly what time is likely to be at the disposal of the Government for the purposes of legislation.

As regards the information already possessed by the country touching the projected Irish Bill, Your Majesty from experience is doubtless well aware that no Government having to deal with a measure of capital difficulty and importance, arrives at final views on the separate heads of such a measure until the time approaches for its actual introduction. But Mr. Gladstone humbly thinks that the principles on which alone such a measure could be constructed by a Liberal Ministry are and have long been perfectly familiar to the country at large.

In their broadest form they are, first, the supremacy of Parliament, which secures the unity of the Empire; and secondly, the effective transfer of business purely Irish to Irish hands; subject however to exceptions devised in the interests of unity. An expansion of these ideas was given to Parliament in 1886 by the ministry of the day under 5 heads as essential to a good measure, no one of which has been withdrawn or modified. The Bill of 1886 was the practical exposition of these ideas, and its spirit has never been in the smallest degree disavowed. The important addition has however been adopted in the retention, according to the apparent public desire, of Irish representation at Westminster. In the actual heads of the Bill, subject to all these conditions, Ireland is deeply interested, but Great Britain less. Upon the whole it appears to Mr. Gladstone that it might be difficult to

name a great measure of the century upon which Great Britain has had fuller knowledge of a forthcoming plan in the po-~~litical~~ which she feels anxiety or lively interest.

Mr. Gladstone in addressing Your Majesty has been most anxious to distinguish between matters of fact and matters of opinion.

What does or does not destroy the Act of Union may be matter of opinion. In the opinion of Earl Cairns,<sup>1</sup> sustained by him with a powerful argument, the Act of Union was destroyed in 1869 by the disestablishment of the Irish Church. In the opinion of the Opposition of 1886 the Act would have been destroyed by the cessation of Irish representation at Westminster. But that opinion seems to disappear, when an Irish representation is retained.

If Mr. Gladstone may mention his own opinion, it is this. Before the Act of Union the Irish Parliament was independent and supreme, and subject to no other authority whatever. But the Irish legislature proposed in 1886 was, like the Colonial legislatures, derived from and wholly subject to the Imperial Parliament. In the maintenance of this subordination, according to Mr. Gladstone's view, lies the essence of the Act of Union.

But when he has spoken of Home Rule in Ireland as a conservative measure, he has principally meant that, as he believed, it would tend powerfully to establish harmony between the several portions of the United Kingdom, and to attach some millions of Your Majesty's subjects far more firmly to Your Majesty's throne, and to the laws and constitution of the country ; such in his idea are the most conservative of all measures ; and such is allowed to have been the effect of substituting local self-Government in Canada and Australia for Government from Downing Street.

With respect to the Irish declarations which Your Majesty thinks may be believed, and which may be held to mean separation from this country, they were, as Mr. Gladstone believes, anterior to 1885. They did not then prevent Conservative Statesmen from holding language undeniably far from favourable to Irish Home Rule. They were the words of men smarting under the recollection of much obstinate, protracted, and often cruel injustice, as well as of men not exempt from the common errors

<sup>1</sup> Lord Chancellor in Mr. Disraeli's Government.

of their kind. But from the time when hope dawned upon them in 1885-6, Mr. Gladstone is unaware of a single declaration of the kind from any person of position or credit.

With regard to the question which Your Majesty describes as so much disputed, whether Irishmen should have the same liberties as the people of Great Britain, may it not be asked whether this dispute is not rather late; for it was upon the solemn promise of these equal liberties and laws (which unhappily has not been kept) that the Irish were exhorted at the period of the Union to rely, as being the great and solid compensation for the loss of their native Parliament so much deplored at the time by Irishmen of all sects and classes.

With respect to the Evicted Tenants Commission Mr. Gladstone gives full attention to Your Majesty's observation, and he will take care to draw to it the like attention of the Chief Secretary<sup>1</sup> whom he expects to see in London tomorrow morning.

Mr. Gladstone in conclusion humbly returns thanks for the frankness, which is also the greatest kindness, of Your Majesty's exposition.

### 1386 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) II, 1899 90.)

HAWARDEN. Dec. 11. 1892.

Mr. Gladstone . . . with great reluctance apprises Your Majesty that in consultation with Sir A. Clark he has been brought to the conclusion, which he had until now hoped to avoid, that it is prudent for him to go for a short time to Biarritz, in consequence of some return of irregularity in sleep, from which he suffered more severely some years back. The measure is one of precaution, and of preparation for approaching labours; and Mr. Gladstone humbly prays Your Majesty's sanction to it. He would probably leave London in about a week. He proposes to remain at Hawarden until Friday morning.

### 1387

### *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. Dec. 13. 1892.

By some mistake the Cypher the Queen wished to send Mr. Gladstone was not sent off yesterday as was intended, which

<sup>1</sup> Mr. J. Morley.

she regrets. She readily sanctions his going abroad & hopes that Biarritz may restore his sleep the loss of w<sup>h</sup> is extremely trying. . . .

We were g<sup>ly</sup> pleased with Lord Acton who is most agreeable. He does not *force* his great learning and knowledge upon anyone—w<sup>h</sup> so many learned people do—w<sup>h</sup> makes him particularly pleasant in Society. . . .

1388 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) II, 200.)

DOWNING STREET. *January* 11. 1893.

Mr. Gladstone humbly notifies to Your Majesty that he returned to England last night and that the object of his journey to Biarritz has been gained as his sleep is completely restored.

^ He left very mild weather at Biarritz on Monday and in Paris yesterday.

1389 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

OSBORNE. *Jan.* 14. 1893.

The Queen thanks Mr. Gladstone for informing her of his return from Biarritz & is glad to hear that he feels benefitted by his stay there.

The Queen acknowledges Mr. Gladstone's two letters reporting the proceedings of the Cabinet & the general objects of the Bill being framed for the Government of Ireland.

1390 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to General Ponsonby*

DOWNING STREET. *January* 17. 1893.

I have in mind the established usage under which, when I first became Prime Minister and thereafter, I made known by a letter written nightly and forthwith to Her Majesty the purport of the proceedings of the House of Commons during the sitting just expired. I am under the impression that under other Governments during the last twenty years, or part of that period, some change has taken place, and that the proceedings of the House have been made known during the sitting from time to time by telegraph. I do not know how far if at all, the change altered the practice, or the character of the nightly letter. I am afraid that I personally can no longer look forward to that regularity of per-

sonal attendance until towards the virtual close of business which was the basis of my old reports. Nor would a report based habitually upon information from others be the same thing, whenever written, as the old report. I have thought that under the circumstances I might ask you to be so kind as to let me know, subject to the Queen's permission, what the practice has been under the Governments of Lord Beaconsfield and Lord Salisbury as this knowledge might afford me some light with a view to any request or proposal I might humbly submit for the immediate future. But I should state that in no case could I submit any request or proposal which would exempt me from the duty of keeping Her Majesty duly informed upon all matters of importance or special interest.

1391

*General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*OSBORNE, *January 18, 1893.*

There has been no change in the custom which has existed I believe since the time of Sir Robert Peel, that the leader of the House of Commons furnished The Queen with a short report of the proceedings in the House.

There have been a few occasions when, if there were nothing of special interest going on, the Prime Minister has not written.

In Lord Salisbury's late Government Mr. Smith and Mr. Balfour wrote regularly.

Your reports have always been most valuable but The Queen observed a short time ago that she could not expect a continuance of these nightly letters from you and asked me whether you would entrust the duty to Sir W. Harcourt<sup>1</sup> or some other member of your Government. I imagine she will readily agree to any suggestion you may make. . . .

1392 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to General Ponsonby**Jan. 19, 1893.*

I write a line only by this post to say how sensible I am of Her Majesty's kindness in being ready to allow of a plan for my relief as to the nightly letter, and to thank you for the information you have given me. I will think over the matter and I hope in a day or two to offer some suggestion.

<sup>1</sup> Chancellor of the Exchequer and Leader of the House of Commons.



1393

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) II, 209-10.)

OSBORNE. Jan. 21. 1893.

The Queen has rec<sup>d</sup> Mr. Gladstone's report of the proceedings of the Cabinet with *deep* regret & she is *much* surprised at their *ignoring* Lord Cromer's<sup>1</sup> strong appeals for reinforcements & for information as to the policy he is to follow if a crisis arises, as he thinks *may be the case at any moment*.—

It is surely *unjustifiable* to leave a British Representative & one of such experience *ignorant* of whether the Government wish to maintain the occupation of Egypt or to suffer their Garrison to scatter or to be driven out of it.—

The moment *that* necessity arises—is the moment *too late* for action as *must* be remembered in the terrible case of Kartoum & cruel fall of Gordon!—If Troops are *sent* to Cairo the necessity will *not* arise and any danger of war will be *averted*.

Lord Cromer asks that the Garrison should be *strengthened* after he had consulted with the *Chief British Officers* who *all know* the *real* state of affairs in Cairo & the Queen *must earnestly* urge the Cabinet *not to neglect* this *advice* of those who are *COMPETENT* & good Servants of the Crown & State & who unite in pressing the strengthening of the British Garrison *if* British Authority is to be maintained.

The Queen wishes Mr. Gladstone to communicate this letter to the Cabinet.

1394 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) II, 210-11.)

DOWNING STREET. 21st Jan. 1893.

Mr. Gladstone . . . regrets that the deliberation and conclusion of the Cabinet yesterday are deemed by Your Majesty unsatisfactory, and he will not fail to make known Your Majesty's letter to his colleagues when they assemble on Monday.

He adds a few words of explanation. He *believes* the feeling of the Cabinet to have been this ; that they are exclusively responsible to Parliament and the nation for all proceedings with respect to the garrison in Egypt and that they could not devolve

<sup>1</sup> Agent and Consul-General in Egypt.

upon Lord Cromer the duty, in view of such facts as he alleged, of determining finally that a necessity for changing its numbers had arisen. Personally for himself Mr. Gladstone would humbly point out that in the telegrams which came before the Cabinet Lord Cromer did not mention that the frontier or the peace of the country or the garrison were in danger. Of course this refers to telegrams before the last Cabinet only; and he certainly deemed it to be a very important fact in the case that even upon the moderate and necessary proceeding adopted last week France has thought fit to record her protest, a measure which according to Mr. Gladstone's recollection and belief is the extremest step that can be internationally taken within the limits of friendliness.

Mr. Gladstone will not refer in detail to the case of General Gordon but after reflecting during all these years upon the sad event he finds it more difficult to reply to the objection that the Government of that day did too much than to the charge of having done too little. Mr. Gladstone regrets that receiving Your Majesty's letter on Saturday just before post he cannot bring it at once to the knowledge of his colleagues in consequence of the dispersion which usually takes place at this time especially after a week's severe labour.

### 1395 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) II, 211.)

10, DOWNING STREET, Jan. 22, 1893.

. . . Mr. Gladstone has also seen the First Lord of the Admiralty<sup>1</sup> and the Secretary of State for War.<sup>2</sup> A ship, bringing back a regiment from India to England, is believed to be at Suez and orders have been sent by Lord Spencer to detain it there at least until tomorrow night so as to give time for further orders in case of need.

### 1396 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[*Telegram*]

OSBORNE, Jan. 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1893.

Have received your letter this morning with satisfaction.

<sup>1</sup> Lord Spencer.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. H. Campbell-Bannerman.

1397 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) II, 213-14.)

OSBORNE. Jan. 23. 1893.

The Queen cannot sufficiently express her relief at the decision now come to by her Govt. which will soon, she doubts not, restore our position in Egypt to what it was, & will reassure the Europeans there. The Telegrams sent seem very judicious.—

The Queen thanks Mr. Gladstone for his letter this morning which was already encouraging.

1398 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram]

OSBORNE. Jan. 28. 1893. 11.5 p.m.

I cannot say that the measure<sup>1</sup> will be for the *better* government of Ireland. Can you leave out "better" and also leave out reference<sup>2</sup> to short Parliament.

1399 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

[Telegram]

10, DOWNING STREET. 29th Jan. 1893.

Your Majesty's Telegram was delivered apparently about midnight and reached me after Church between half past one and two today. I summoned a few colleagues in haste. We are prepared, as it is impossible to gather the Cabinet at the moment, instead of "better government" to resume if agreeable to Your Majesty's words used in 1886 which was "to amend the provision for the [Government of Ireland]." The other Bill only substitutes *five* years for seven. The term after the Revolution was three. But the change though slight is constitutional and Cabinet thought that on principle it should be named in the Speech a reason which we think Your Majesty will appreciate.

## 1400

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) II, 217.)

OSBORNE. Jan. 30. 1893.

The Queen acknowledges Mr. Gladstone's letter with the Draft of the Speech. She will say no more about this as there have been telegraphic messages on this subject.

She is anxious to impress on Mr. Gladstone the *great* importance

<sup>1</sup> Home Rule Bill.<sup>2</sup> In the Queen's Speech.

of his using firm & unequivocal language in the House as regards Egypt, as the Khedive will take advantage of any observation to repeat his recent very improper & ungrateful conduct.

The recent prompt action of her Govt. has had the best effect abroad.

1401 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

DOWNING STREET. Jan. 30 1893

Mr. Gladstone . . . assures Your Majesty that he has no intention of receding from the language already used respecting Egypt, and no apprehension of any such recession on the part of others.

He also humbly refers to the latest telegraphic correspondence exclusively for the purpose of mentioning that the use of the phrase "better government" meant nothing more than the observance of form and usage, and was in no way intended to convey a covert compliment to the measure or to the policy of the Administration.

1402 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) II, 444 5.)

DOWNING STREET. Feb. 13. 1893.

Mr. Gladstone . . . reports to Your Majesty that he this day introduced the new Irish Government Bill in a lengthened speech to a very considerable House.

It was mildly received by the Opposition and the atmosphere was more pacific than perhaps in the case of a subject so contentious it would have been reasonable to expect. . . .

1403 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) II, 227.)

WINDSOR CASTLE. Feb. 20. 1893.

The Queen thanks Mr. Gladstone for his letters reporting the Debates on the Irish Bill.

She cannot conceal from him her feelings of anxiety and apprehension with reference to the provisions of this measure

which tend towards the disruption of her Empire and the establishment of an impracticable form of Government.

1404 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) II, 228-9.)

10, DOWNING STREET. *Feb.* 20. 1893.

Mr. Gladstone submits his humble duty to Your Majesty and humbly expresses his thankfulness to Your Majesty for the very frank expression of Your Majesty's apprehensions as to the tendencies of the Irish Government Bill.

He is certain that Your Majesty does not believe that the very large body of Your subjects, forming a great majority in three out of four divisions of the country and a considerable (possibly a growing) minority in England, are wilfully set upon establishing an impracticable form of Government, or upon weakening the ties which bind together the members of the Empire.

Your Majesty has already received with condescending and exemplary toleration the long paper in which Mr. Gladstone has set forth his own personal apprehensions that a too great prolongation of the Irish controversy may beget mischief in Ireland by provoking a revival of the far more formidable demand for the repeal of the Union; and that there has been already visible a stimulus to the desire for change, in the various portions of Great Britain, extended somewhat beyond the limits of what is altogether prudent and safe.

The form of Government now proposed, and by many thought dangerous for Ireland was, before trial in the Colonies, as loudly denounced, but upon trial was found to justify none of these denunciations.

Mr. Gladstone will not attempt to press upon Your Majesty with anything like contentious argument; but he does not wholly abandon the hope that, as discussion proceeds, it may tend to soften some of those unfavourable anticipations which, as they cannot but be painful to Your Majesty, are also on that account a source of much pain also to those who have the honour to serve Your Majesty, and who, if they be wrong in this great matter, are indeed worthy of the severest censure for their breach of trust.

1405

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) II, 232-3.)

WINDSOR CASTLE. Feb. 25. 1893.

The Queen was much surprised to find on reading the report of the Debate in the House of Commons on Thursday night that what Mr. Gladstone did not sufficiently explain and thought led her to suppose was *merely* a bill for suspending claims founded on *vested* Church interests in *Wales*,<sup>1</sup>—was, as Mr. Asquith\* *admitted*, the *first step towards the disestablishment & disendowment* of the Church of England ! !

There is *no* "*Church of Wales*" & therefore this measure is *in reality directed against the whole Church* !

The Queen thinks Mr. Gladstone *cannot* have *fully* considered this, and she must say this is a *very serious step* & one which she *cannot* help contemplating with GREAT ALARM.

She *now* recognizes the *force* of the protest of the Deputation of Convocation received on Thursday, in their Address, in the answer to which she was *advised* to ignore the remonstrance of the Bishops & Clergy against this *calamitous* proceeding.

Surely Mr. Gladstone *cannot* be *aware* of the *strong* feeling of uneasiness and apprehension, which the Home Rule Bill produces & to add this measure to it is most *imfortunate*.

Had the Queen *known* the *real* intention of the Government she would *not* have passed over in *silence* the Protest of the Bishops & Clergy.--

The Queen *trusts* Mr. Gladstone may *yet pause* before taking so *disastrous* a step, as to *attempt to disestablish* part of the English Church of wh *she* is the *Head* ; & of which she *always* thought Mr. Gladstone was a *loyal member*.

1406 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) II, 235.)

DOWNING STREET. Feb. 27. 1893.

. . . He deemed it his duty to make known to Mr. Asquith Your Majesty's letter of the 25th. Mr. Asquith (who was out of town during most of yesterday) apprises him (in conformity with Mr. Gladstone's recollection, which however if it stood

<sup>1</sup> Established Church (Wales) Bill.

\* Home Secretary.

alone, would not be of great value) that he used no language which treated the Bill as being in his view, or in the view of the Government, a first step towards the disestablishment or disendowment of the Church of England.

1407 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

BUCKINGHAM PALACE. *March 10. 1893.*

The Queen . . . commands me to observe that in the present circumstances she would have expected, when a great and grave constitutional change is contemplated in the relations of the three Kingdoms, that it would have been desirable to give ample time for the fullest consideration of the measure.

But you condemn any steps taken for suggesting any postponement of the second reading of the Irish Government Bill as leading to obstruction and the Cabinet seem desirous of forcing on the Bill with the utmost haste.

The Queen cannot think this wise, for [if] the Bill is pressed on through the House of Commons before it has been carefully examined by the Country the people will justly complain that they have not had time to understand the provisions of the measure.

1408 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) II, 237-8.)

DOWNING ST. *March 10. 1893.*

. . . He entirely concurs in Your Majesty's view that very full time should be allowed for the discussion of so grave a measure as the Irish Government Bill. But he thinks that Sir H. Ponsonby's letter has been written under some degree of misapprehension, due without doubt to defective explanation on the part of Mr. Gladstone.

In order to give the largest measure of time for the consideration of the Bill, Mr. Gladstone gave notice of its introduction for the 4th of February. It was however through the prolongation to ten days of the debate on the Address postponed until the 11th. The second reading now stands for the 16th of March and Your Majesty will without doubt be pleased to observe that the interval is an unusually long one.

In 1886, when the subject was entirely new, a month's interval

was allowed, but even that long term is now exceeded. Mr. Gladstone thinks it would be difficult to find an instance when, in the case of a great Bill proposed with a view to a settlement, the second reading was taken at a date so late in relation to the period of its introduction.

1409 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to General Ponsonby*

10, DOWNING STREET. *March 16. 1893.*

Sir W. Harcourt<sup>1</sup> tells me that the Queen, in conversation with him at Windsor last Saturday, remarked that I did not when admitted to the honour of an audience introduce into the conversation any matter of business. This is certainly so ; and my rule has been not to refer to any subject of a *class* different from such as Her Majesty might have selected. But if the Queen allows a greater latitude I shall be ready to regard myself as at liberty to refer to any matter of business which so far as I can judge is not likely to be otherwise than agreeable to Her Majesty. I am sensible of the kindness of the Queen's inquiries ; and am happy to say that I hope to be 'in my place' tomorrow.

1410 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. *March 20. 1893.*

The Queen has read your letter of the 16th. She thinks that formerly you spoke to her on all matters connected with measures contemplated by the Government without any special invitation from her to do so.

At any rate Her Majesty hopes you will communicate to her, at your audiences, any matters which you may think she ought to be made acquainted with.

1411 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

VILLA PALMIERI, FLORENCE. *Ap. 12. 1893.*

. . . Nothing can exceed the kindness the Queen<sup>1</sup> receives from every one here. The weather is splendid, always sunshine & a deep blue sky, but rain is wanted for the Country. They have had snow for six weeks here ! Occasionally we have had a little cold wind—but it never lasts.—

<sup>1</sup> Chancellor of the Exchequer.



Mr. Leader<sup>1</sup> is not here—so the Queen has not had the pleasure of seeing him.

The Queen has visited the Pitti & Uffizzi Galleries & thinks she admired the splendid Pictures there even more than before. She has also been to S<sup>ta</sup> Maria Novella & the Annunziati.

**1412** (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

DOWNING STREET. 14-15 *April*. 1893.

. . . The debate of today [was] commenced by Mr. Asquith.<sup>2</sup> He delivered what appeared to Mr. Gladstone to be nothing less than a great and masterly speech ; and to be accepted as such by the entire House. . . .

**1413** (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

DOWNING STREET. 18<sup>th</sup> *April*. 1893<sup>a</sup>

Mr. Gladstone has to acknowledge with his humble duty Your Majesty's gracious letter of the 12<sup>th</sup> and he is sincerely rejoiced to observe from every sign that Your Majesty has had large opportunities of satisfaction and enjoyment at Florence. Mr. Gladstone is confident that if Mr. Leader had been present during Your Majesty's visit and if Your Majesty had thought fit to make use of his good offices, he would have been found almost an infallible guide in all matters affecting the local history of Florence and the treasures which the city contains. From his long residence, Italian connections, and acquaintance with the several classes of men, he is acquainted with in any objects of art, and has access to them, which are not generally known, and are not, or were not, mentioned in the guide books. It may amuse Your Majesty to know that his physiognomy is extremely well produced in the figure of San Callisto in the Facciata of the Duomo. Mr. Gladstone trusts that Your Majesty will have a favourable journey homeward.

**1414** (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) II, 249.)

10, DOWNING STREET. 18-19 *April*. 1893.

. . . A little later in the evening Mr. Austen Chamberlain, son of Mr. Chamberlain, took part for the first time in the debates

<sup>1</sup> Mr. J. T. Leader, of Vincigliata.

<sup>2</sup> Home Secretary.

of the House. He delivered one of the best speeches which has been made against the bill, and exhibited himself as a person of whom high political anticipations may reasonably be entertained<sup>1</sup> . . .

#### 1415 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) II, 250-1.)

DOWNING STREET. *April 21, 1893.*

Mr. Gladstone reports . . . that the House of Commons has now after 12 days brought the Debate on the second Reading of the Home Rule or Irish Government Bill to a close. On the division the numbers were

Ayes—for the Bill	. . . . .	347
Nocs—against it	. . . . .	304
		<hr/>
Majority	. . . . .	43

The numbers voting are large as compared with those of the olden time, and they bear witness to the intensity of the struggle. The Government have no reason to be dissatisfied with the result. . . .

#### 1416 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

DOWNING STREET. *May 4, 1893.*

Mr. Gladstone presents his humble duty, and, having had the honour to receive authentic information of the engagement contracted by H.R.H. the Duke of York,<sup>2</sup> he begs to tender to Your Majesty his humble and dutiful, but most hearty congratulations, and the expression of his earnest trust that the projected union may be crowned with every blessing in time and in eternity.

#### 1417 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. *May 5, 1893.*

The Queen thanks Mr. Gladstone very much for his kind congratulations on the betrothal of her dear Grandson George with Princess Victoria Mary of Teck. This event . . . gives her

<sup>1</sup> The occasion of a graceful compliment to Mr. J. Chamberlain by Mr. Gladstone.

<sup>2</sup> H.M. King George V, whose engagement to Princess Mary of Teck was announced.

great satisfaction and she has every reason to hope & believe will be a happy marriage.

That God may bless the dear young people and give them a long & prosperous life for the happiness & comfort of us all, as well as of the Country is the Queen's earnest prayer !—

The Queen w<sup>ld</sup> like to see Mr. Gladstone at Buckingham Palace either on Monday at 3 or on Wednesday at 4.

1418 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

May 17. 1893.

Mr. Gladstone . . . in submitting to Your Majesty the accompanying list of persons recommended to receive honours from Your Majesty's grace and favour, recalls Your Majesty's desire, expressed soon after the formation of the present Ministry, that the presentation of any list should be deferred for some time. With this desire Mr. Gladstone has humbly endeavoured to comply ; and he trusts Your Majesty will think his prayer for the creation of Peerages to be a moderate one. . . .

1419 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

DOWNING STREET. 22 May, 1893.

Mr. Gladstone . . . thanks Your Majesty for the gracious assent to the Peerage and Bath honours.

With respect to the Baronets and Knights, Your Majesty will doubtless have observed that they represent (except as to the few points connected with the changes of Government) the operations of a whole year, as the present Government have now been in office over nine months and no further submission during this season was contemplated.

But Mr. Gladstone imagines that Your Majesty sees inconvenience in connecting these large numbers with the anniversary of the Birthday, and he will at once consult with his colleagues as to a postponement in such a manner as to meet Your Majesty's present wish.

1420 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

DOWNING STREET. 24th May. 1893.

Mr. Gladstone . . . hopes to be able to transmit tomorrow for Your Majesty's consideration a shortened list.

In the meantime Your Majesty will be feels sure not disapprove his desire to shew that as a general rule he has exercised all the care and restraint he could in his submissions to Your Majesty of lists of names for honours since the time when he first had the honour to be charged with this duty.

A summary statement is enclosed.

## ENCLOSURE

Period, Dec. 1868 to Dec. 31. 1892 24 years 1 Month.<sup>1</sup>

Conservative Governments	under 13 years
Liberal Governments	over 11 years

*Totals of Honours Granted*

	Conservative Governments	Liberal Governments
Peerages . . . . .	135	67
Privy Councillorships . . . . .	57	39
Bath . . . . .	338	241*
Baronetcies . . . . .	129	57
Knighthoods . . . . .	235	187

W. E. G. May 24—93.

\*Perhaps very slightly overstated.

1421

*General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE, July 7. 1893.

The Queen regrets that through a misunderstanding she did not see you at the breakfast yesterday<sup>2</sup>—She had intended receiving the Chief Cabinet Ministers and I told her you had waited till 3.15 when you were obliged to go to the House. She told me she had wished to receive you and Mrs. Gladstone just after the Ambassadors. . . .

I sought for Mrs. Gladstone but could not find her and believe she had gone to give a parting cheer to the Bride and Bridegroom at the door.

<sup>1</sup> Subsequently corrected as follows :

Period from 1 January, 1868	25 years.
Conservative Governments	under 14 years.
Liberal Governments	under 13 years.

<sup>2</sup> Wedding of the Duke of York, July 6, 1893.

1422 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) II, 287-90.)

DOWNING STREET. July 27-8. 1893.

Mr. Gladstone . . . has to send Your Majesty an unusual and painful report for the past evening. From the commencement of business, until 10 o'clock, the debate proceeded upon the principal financial clause without any circumstance of moment or even of special interest, except that the Irish members advanced large pecuniary claims, and were answered mainly by members of the Opposition. At ten o'clock, when the time of closure was arriving, Mr. Chamberlain happened to use some words which created excitement and gave offence, but were in no way noted as disorderly by authority. However, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, a Nationalist member, called out repeatedly to him "Judas," "Judas." One or two members endeavoured to bring this disorderly act to the notice of the Chairman, but the uproar which prevailed made them totally inaudible. The Chairman meanwhile proceeded regularly to call the Division (according to the Order) and directed the House to be cleared. Mr. Balfour had left the House not intending to vote, and [a] large body of the Opposition retained their seats ; while on the side of the Government very many were ignorant of the Judas incident. In the meantime, from what it is hoped was an accidental cause, Colonel Saunderson was led to believe himself assaulted and struck, and thereupon some, perhaps many, blows were given and received among members in a portion of the House. But there was a double action in this confused and deplorable drama, and the use of the offensive word "Judas" was shortly made known to the Chairman, who had the words taken down, and the Speaker was recalled to the Chair. He after some explanations, and when Mr. O'Connor's offence had been sufficiently established, called upon him to make reparation by apology. Mr. O'Connor offered an apology which appeared to Mr. Gladstone by no means ample. But the Speaker, set upon the restoration of order, accepted it and recommended that the whole incident should drop. Thereupon Colonel Saunderson rose and declared he<sup>d</sup> had been assaulted. He was followed by other members, who stated that they had seen him strike out right and left. The Speaker

thought that the prosecution of the subject would only lead to confused contradiction, and still recommended that it should be allowed to drop. The House acquiesced in the recommendation, but the minds of men were not altogether satisfied, although the great object of restoring the order of proceedings had been obtained. Mr. Gladstone has supplied Your Majesty with the best outline in his power to give to what he has called a painful scene. It is probable that in the Press much will be said on the subject, at present it is not possible to distribute praise or blame (though a Tory member bore witness that Mr. T. Healy endeavoured to check the use of the word 'Judas'). It is possible that a little more time, and the comparison of conflicting statements, may throw effectual light upon the occurrence, of which, though Mr. Gladstone was present, his sight and hearing gave him but a very imperfect knowledge. What remains certain is that blows were used. This is an incident alike novel and disgraceful. It bears distinct testimony to the vehemence of the feelings with which men, Irishmen perhaps especially, regard the question now at issue; but it sadly marks a point in Parliamentary history. During the 60 years of Mr. Gladstone's experience nothing of the like has occurred. There is a rumour of such an incident in the time of Mr. Pitt, but Mr. Gladstone's memory does not serve him sufficiently to dwell on it. In any case it marks a black day; and to some it will be a subject of regret, that, when the matter had already become public, nothing could be done to identify effectually the performers in the scene, or to bring them to account. There is no reason however, to suspect in any quarter more than passion and precipitancy. The proceedings occupied an hour, which might certainly have been better spent. A long series of divisions followed. In the first of them the majority of the Government was reduced to 21. This caused rapturous cheering among the Opposition, but it was due mainly to the abstention of the Parnellite group. On the next division the majority rose to 33 and there or thereabouts it continued in a series of other divisions. But on the question of reducing the Irish members to 80 the majority sank to 17, but rose immediately afterwards to 31. At 1 o'clock was put the final motion, on the 68th day of debate, for reporting the preamble of the Bill. This was carried by a majority of 30, with prolonged Liberal cheering. Mr. Gladstone

was told that during the uproar in the House, there was hissing in the Strangers' Gallery.

1423

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) II, 290.)

OSBORNE. July 30. 1893.

The Queen has rec<sup>d</sup>: Mr. Gladstone's report of the Proceedings in Parliament on Thursday with much surprise & sincere regret.

In the midst of all the unseemly riot and the disgraceful conduct of many Members of Parliament; the Queen wonders if Mr. Gladstone does not feel that the majority of the British Nation feel very strongly the ways in which the *small* Irish Majority is used to force through a measure wh<sup>ch</sup> is so repugnant to the feelings of the former & so fraught with danger to the Constitution?

Does not Mr. Gladstone feel that the exertions & irritation produced by them have been the cause of such unseemly violence?

1424 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) II, 290-1.)

July 31. 1893.

Mr. Gladstone acknowledges with his humble duty Your Majesty's letter which he has just had the honour to receive, and humbly observes that he has pointed out to Your Majesty his belief in an indirect connection between the Home Rule controversy and the disgraceful proceedings of last Thursday. He may perhaps add the observation that as this is an United Parliament and an United Kingdom, he desires to be guarded in distinguishing between the relative numbers returned by the several parts of it: He has also to remember that the majorities from Scotland and Wales agree with the majority from Ireland; and though the aggregate majority may be deemed a small majority, it is a larger one than has been returned to conduct the affairs of the country in the greater number of the Parliaments since the Reform Bill. It would indeed be a pleasure to Mr. Gladstone if he were able to bring his convictions into conformity with those of Your Majesty.

1425 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

10, DOWNING STREET. Aug. 1. 1893.

Mr. Gladstone . . . has to apologise to Your Majesty for an error in the letter of yesterday when he stated that in the majority of the Parliaments elected since the first Reform Act the Parliamentary majority had been smaller than in the present Parliament. There is no work known to Mr. Gladstone which gives authentic information, but Mr. Gladstone has to-day examined the matter as well as he could, and he desires somewhat to limit the assertion of yesterday. He thinks that beyond doubt the majority was less than that of the present Parliament in the Parliaments of 1835, 1837, 1847, 1852, and 1859. One other Parliament, if not two, may be considered doubtful. Mr. Gladstone has to ask pardon for the inadvertence now described.

1426 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) II, 310.)

Nov. 13. 1893.

Mr. Gladstone . . . reports to Your Majesty that the Cabinet met today for the purpose of considering the grave public evils which are consequent upon the present prolonged and extensive strike in the Coal Trade: and the possibility of any useful intervention by Your Majesty's Servants. Preliminary inquiries have been made by the President of the Board of Trade<sup>1</sup> among the leading persons of the opposite sides. It is believed that the Employers might be led to make reasonable concessions. On the side of the men, Mr. Pickard, M.P., who is believed to exercise a great influence, has shown little disposition to move: others associated with him are more favourable.

The Cabinet appointed a few of their number to conduct the further communication. They do not propose to undertake arbitration or mediation, to which they are invited by neither party: but Lord Rosebery has consented to preside at a meeting of the two parties, if it shall appear that the interval still to be bridged over is narrow, and that such a meeting might fairly be expected to lead to a friendly adjustment. . . .

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Mundella.



1427

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

BALMORAL CASTLE. Nov. 14. 1893.

The Queen is anxious to know what is proposed to be done about the Coal Strikes w<sup>h</sup> she thinks are v<sup>y</sup> serious & what means can be suggested to relieve the great distress w<sup>h</sup> undoubtedly must be the result of the poor if they continue & w<sup>h</sup> cause the Queen much anxiety.

Has it been brought before the Cabinet, & is *no* mediation between the employers & their men be possible? . . .

1428 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*DOWNING STREET. 16<sup>th</sup> Nov. 1893.

. . . The communications with the parties to the strike took effect in the arrangement made on Monday evening, and stated to the House of Commons on its adjournment soon after midnight as it was needful to prevent inaccurate reports on a subject when they might be so mischievous. The mischiefs of the contest are not less grave and various than Your Majesty has conceived them to be. The position of neither party can be regarded with unmixed approval: but the miners have had the advantage of greater union, or more complete controul from the centre. The Cabinet were of opinion that the dispute between them was now so narrowed that the remaining points of difference might probably be adjusted by further interchange of ideas if such interchange took place under conditions which would bring to bear a silent moral influence from without, representative of the general sentiment, in favour of adjustment. They thought this moral influence would be very advantageously represented through Lord Rosebery, who exhibited so much tact as well as insight and vigour in the Chair of the County Council. Tomorrow, when the parties meet, may it is hoped see the close of a struggle which has become so painful and so mischievous.

1429

*Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. Nov. 19. 1893.

The Queen thanks Mr. Gladstone for his 2 letters & rejoices v<sup>y</sup> much at the settlement of the Coal Strike w<sup>h</sup> was very alarming & w<sup>h</sup> was admirably managed by Lord Rosebery. . . .

1430 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. November 19. 1893.

The Queen commands me to express a hope that you and Mrs. Gladstone will be able to dine and sleep here on Friday next the 24th November.

1431 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to General Ponsonby*

London. Nov. 20. 1893.

I am going to take a great liberty. But my sleeping power (a great prop) has of late been somewhat deranged, and I made arrangements last week for going to Brighton (which particularly agrees with me) for three nights on Friday next. Do you think that under the circumstances Her Majesty would be so gracious as to dispense with our coming; naming if it were her pleasure any other earlier or later day.

1432 (Copy) *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. Nov. 20. 1893.

The Queen will not of course interfere with your sea breeze at Brighton. But hopes you and Mrs. Gladstone will dine and sleep here on Thursday the 23rd.

1433 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

DOWNING STREET. Nov. 20. 1893.

Mr. Gladstone . . . together with Your Majesty rejoices in the settlement of the Coal dispute, to which he does not doubt that the skill and tact of Lord Rosebery have greatly contributed.

The course of the antecedent struggle presents matter for grave consideration and in some respects regret, and it may be that difficulties are to be apprehended in the future. But a real step has been made, and if the temper of antagonism has been mitigated there is nothing in the case itself to prevent the establishment as a general rule of harmonious relations.

Mr. Gladstone feels it to be no more than just to mention to Your Majesty that Mr. Mundella as President of the Board of Trade contributed greatly to the formation of the recent arrangements, and has, in Mr. Gladstone's judgment, acted in the whole matter with a discernment equal to his benevolence.

1434 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) II, 328.)

WINDSOR CASTLE. Dec. 7. 1893.

The Queen would wish Mr. Gladstone to consult his Colleagues on the present state of affairs abroad and ask them if they are satisfied with the condition of the Army & Navy, in the event of the outbreak of War with any of the Great Powers. The dislike of the French to us cannot be concealed and their alliance with the Russians is a combination which *might* prove *disastrous* to our small forces.—The Queen *firmly* believes that the supremacy of our Navy would *always* be *supported by the Country* which would *naturally* be opposed to economy when practised at the *expense* of the National Force; & the Queen *cannot sufficiently* impress on her Ministers the *paramount* necessity of *maintaining* that *supremacy* on which the *very existence* of the *Empire depends*.—

The Queen thinks that *no time* should be *lost* in *increasing* our Navy with men & material & in *strengthening* our Army, already too weak for the duties they have to perform.

The Queen is no alarmist but she cannot deny that she thinks the state of *Affairs* *very serious*, & there is great alarm abroad about the Mediterranean —

The Queen wishes Mr. Gladstone to read this letter to the Cabinet.

1435 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) II, 329–30.)

BRIGHTON. Dec. 12. 1893.

Mr. Gladstone . . . acquaints Your Majesty that on receiving Your Majesty's letter relating to the defences of the Country last Thursday evening he at once summoned the Cabinet for an early hour on Friday. But he was unable on that day to leave his bed: he also found that the Foreign Secretary<sup>1</sup> would be absent from town until tomorrow, and further that the Minister of War<sup>2</sup> had been attacked by the influenza. He felt persuaded that Your Majesty would desire both these Ministers to be present on the occasion of reading the letter: and he now only awaits the further progress of Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, and his ability to

<sup>1</sup> Lord Rosebery.<sup>2</sup> Mr. Campbell-Bannerman.

attend. On hearing this he proposes to summon the Cabinet at once, and to proceed according to Your Majesty's desire.

1436 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. Dec. 13. 1893.

The Queen thanks Mr. Gladstone for his letter rec<sup>d</sup> yesterday written from Brighton.

She quite understands that he c<sup>ld</sup> not hold a Cabinet, not only on account of his own indisposition but also on account of Mr. Campbell-Bannerman's—and the absence of Lord Rosebery. But she trusts that he will soon be able to bring the all important subject of her letter before the Cabinet.

From what several of his Colleagues stated to her in conversation she hopes that there will be little difference of opinion.

The Queen hopes Mrs. Gladstone has recovered from the Influenza w<sup>h</sup> seems to be again so prevalent in London & elsewhere.

1437 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) II, 330 2.)

10, DOWNING STREET. 14<sup>th</sup> Dec. 1893.

Mr. Gladstone reports . . . that at the meeting of the Cabinet in the forenoon of today he read to his colleagues Your Majesty's letter of the 7<sup>th</sup> inst. which they took into consideration forthwith. They found the subject to be in a measure anticipated by a notice which has been given on the part of the Parliamentary Opposition, and which is to be the subject of a question in the House of Commons from Mr. Balfour to Mr. Gladstone today.

Lord G. Hamilton's motion substitutes the House of Commons for the executive in the discharge of one of its capital duties, namely the preparation of Estimates of Naval change. In this view it is a vote of want of confidence, which it is the duty of Ministers at once to assist in bringing to issue. It also entirely subverts our established administration and financial system by requiring the production of plans at the period when the Ministers and Departments are engaged in collecting and digesting the materials on which in the regular annual course plans are to be founded. A copy of the Notice is inclosed. It appeared to be the duty of the Cabinet to decline that general discussion on our Navy force as premature, and to assist the responsibility of Your Majesty's Advisers and

their duty to submit adequate measures at the proper time, now rapidly approaching. It was agreed that Mr. Gladstone should submit an amendment to Lord G. Hamilton's motion, of which notice will be given to-day in replying to Mr. Balfour's question.

Your Majesty's letter has not been interpreted as conveying a desire that the plans of the Admiralty should be produced at a time when they are necessarily immature. It is believed to mean that these plans should be framed with a full regard to the present condition of Europe and to any combinations which have arisen or may arise. The judgment of the Cabinet must of necessity follow the proposals of the Government, but Mr. Gladstone feels sure that these proposals will be framed with the care and in the spirit which he has endeavoured to describe. He may not be a very competent reporter of a merely fragmentary conversation, as his own views in these subjects have varied little from those which were entertained by the leaders of both parties at the time when he had first the honour of becoming one of Your Majesty's Advisers under Sir R. Peel. He thinks however it was largely felt in the Cabinet that while the present superiority of Your Majesty's Navy in the principal classes of vessels is both manifest and very large, important questions remain as to the measures which will be necessary in the future, while in one particular, which relates to Torpedo and anti-Torpedo vessels, this country is behindhand. These however are incidental though important particulars and all the Ministers remain free to consider the general subject with unbiassed minds, and a strong sense of their duty to Your Majesty and to the Country. . . .

1438

*General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) II, 332)WINDSOR CASTLE. *December 17. 1893.*

The Queen does not think that Lord George Hamilton's motion was intended to be a vote of want of confidence and is sorry the Cabinet should have taken this view which looks as if they objected to any discussion on the Navy. Your interpretation of The Queen's letter is correct and she thinks—and it appears to her the Nation thinks—we should not be afraid of enquiring whether we are as strong at Sea as we should be.

The Queen does not look on measures for our national defence

as a political question and regrets that the subject should on Tuesday next be converted into one.

**1439** (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to General Ponsonby*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) II, 333.)

DOWNING STREET, Dec. 18. 1893.

With respect to the character of tomorrow's motion (one so far as I know wholly without precedent) there was no option as to the light in which we had to regard it. This was settled by the Opposition. First by the nature of the motion which takes out of the hands of the Government one of its capital duties. Secondly by the concert on the Opposition Bench when the Leader came forward with a question amounting to a demand for a day to discuss the motion.

It is the regular stereotyped course pursued on questions vital to the Government and on those only. Accordingly when I treated the motion in the manner which seems, I fear, strange to Her Majesty there was no sort of disclaimer either from the Front Bench or those behind.

**1440** *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[*Telegram*]

OSBORNE, December 23. 1893.

I must thank you for all you have done about Alfred and on result of debate.<sup>1</sup>

**1441** *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

OSBORNE, Dec. 23. 1893.

The Queen thanks Mr. Gladstone for his report of the proceedings on the Annuity of the Duke of Saxe Coburg, & for the able manner in wh<sup>h</sup> he managed the introduction of this subject—& the firmness with wh<sup>h</sup> he defeated that . . . mischievous individual Mr. Labouchere.—

Mr. Gladstone is always vy happy in his handling of disagreeable though she must add—totally misunderstood—questions.—

She cannot think that the subject will crop up again.

<sup>1</sup> On the Duke of Coburg's annuity.

1442 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

DOWNING STREET, Dec. 26. 1893.

Mr. Gladstone has had the honour to receive Your Majesty's gracious letter of the 23rd and offers his humble thanks and duty. He desires to confirm as far as he may Your Majesty's impression that the position taken with respect to the Duke of Coburg is a secure one. Mr. Labouchere has given notice of a hostile motion which recommends a gross illegality and conveys no idea of a clear or decided purpose. He has also addressed a letter to the *Daily Chronicle* which is capable of being understood as a farewell to the subject. But whether there be a revival or not, the arrangement in Mr. Gladstone's view is just and should be defended if necessary not apologetically but with decision.

1443 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) II, 340-1.)

OSBORNE. Jan. 2. 1894.

The time seems come, according the Queen thinks to former precedents, for Mr. Gladstone to offer to confer a step in the Peerage on Lord Lansdowne<sup>1</sup> who has done admirably in his very arduous & most responsible position. The Queen thinks Lord Dufferin was *offered* the Marquisate some time before he left India. Lord Lansdowne may most likely (tho' the Queen knows nothing as to his feelings) decline a Dukedom & then he ought to have the Garter. Unfortunately Lord Breadalbane is to have the one just vacant—<sup>wh</sup> is a pity but there are precedents for one being given beforehand & the next vacant one not being filled up. The Queen thinks this was done for Lord Salisbury when he & Lord Beaconsfield rec<sup>d</sup> the Garter after the Treaty of Berlin.

This c<sup>ld</sup> be done again if the Dukedom is not accepted.—Lord Northbrook was made an Earl, Lord Canning—the same & Sir J. Lawrence a peer.—It sh<sup>ld</sup> not be delayed.

1444 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

DOWNING STREET. Jan. 3. 1894.

Mr. Gladstone . . . has to acknowledge the receipt of Your Majesty's letter concerning Lord Lansdowne, to which he did not fail to give immediate consideration. . . .

<sup>1</sup> Retiring Governor-General of India.

To prevent loss of time he will at once enquire respecting the precedents in the Order of the Garter to which Your Majesty refers.

1445 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

DOWNING STREET. Jan. 9. 1894.

Mr. Gladstone humbly recommends to Your Majesty

That the offer of a Baronetcy, declined by Mr. Watts at the time when this title was conferred on Sir J. E. Millais, be renewed.

That a similar offer be made to Mr. Burne Jones on account of his great eminence in art and the very high place he occupies in public estimation.

The subject of Honours in Art has not he thinks been dealt with for some time and he has deemed it part of his duty to consider it.

1446 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) II, 342-3.)

DOWNING STREET. Jan. 9. 1894.

Mr. Gladstone . . . reports to Your Majesty that the Cabinet met this day and entered upon a preliminary discussion with respect to the Naval Estimates and Establishments for the forthcoming financial year.

As a preliminary conversation, it did not embrace any substantive conclusions ; and the Cabinet reserve for further examination the question what advice they shall tender to Your Majesty as to amounts and particulars.

There can however be no doubt in Mr. Gladstone's opinion, formed upon hearing the conversation, that they will eventually propose to Your Majesty an augmentation of the Estimates for the Navy, even beyond the point which they attained, under the Defence Act, for the year 1893-4.

1447 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) II, 343.)

DOWNING STREET. Jan. 9. 1894.

Mr. Gladstone presents his humble duty, and prays for Your Majesty's gracious sanction to his going abroad for a short time at the end of the present week.



Considering his age, Your Majesty will not feel surprised at his saying that he prefers the present humble request on the ground of health.

1448 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[*Telegram*]

OSBORNE. *January 9th.* 1894.

I am glad to announce to you the engagement of my dear Grand Children the Grand Duke of Hesse to Princess Victoria Melita of Coburg which took place this evening and which gives me great pleasure was the dear Late Grand Duke's great wish.

1449 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[*Telegram*]

OSBORNE. *January 10* [1894]. 3.5 p.m.

I certainly grant you the desired permission to go abroad. When will Parliament be prorogued?

1450 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

OSBORNE. *Jan'y: 11.* 1894.\*

The Queen thanks Mr. Gladstone for his letters of the 9th.—She is very glad to hear that the Govt. are prepared to do what is *right & absolutely necessary* for the safety of the Empire as regards the efficiency of Navy.

With respect to the two Artists who Mr. Gladstone recommends for Baronetcies—the Queen would wish some little time for consideration before answering.

1451 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) II, 346-7)

OSBORNE. *Jan. 14.* 1894.

The Queen is much surprised & grieved by Mr. Gladstone's letter of the 12th<sup>1</sup> as she does not suppose that party politics were allowed to interfere with the rewards of men who have honourably & faithfully served their Sovereign & Country abroad. She *cannot* agree for a moment in offering the Vice Roy a minor honour such as a G.C.B. which would be considered as almost an *insult* to one who has done his duty so well in the very high Office of Vice Roy of India & w<sup>h</sup> would lower his position in that great Empire.—The Queen would therefore prefer to leave him unnoticed though

<sup>1</sup> As to an honour for Lord Lansdowne.

she thinks that this *ignoring* of a great Office will be *considered* by the world as a *marked* expression of *party* hatreds which have *never* been *yet* expressed in this manner by *any one* of *her Prime Ministers*.

Mr. Gladstone implies that the question was brought before the Cabinet, but the Queen as "the fountain of honour" does not think that such matters are ever discussed by her Ministers, many of whom, at present, are ignorant of such rewards for distinguished services. The Queen thinks the Prime Minister may privately consult the Secretary for Foreign & Colonial Affairs,<sup>1</sup> but the distribution of honours is *not* a question for the Cabinet.

#### 1452 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

BIARRITZ. Jan. 16. 1894.

Your Majesty has been pleased to speak most graciously concerning Mr. Wickham, and Mr. Gladstone can truly say that the fact of his being a son-in-law is the only weak point in his case.

#### ENCLOSURE

BIARRITZ. Jan. 16. 1894.

The Rev. Edward Wickham, late Head Master of Wellington College, is humbly recommended to Your Majesty by Mr. Gladstone, to succeed to the Deanery of Lincoln, vacant by the death of Dr. Butler.

#### 1453 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) II. 348 50.)

BIARRITZ. 17th Jan. 1894.

Mr. Gladstone presents his humble duty, and has the honour to acknowledge Your Majesty's letter on the case of Lord Lansdowne. That letter enters into particulars of great interest, on which he thinks Your Majesty would desire him to offer an entirely explicit reply. Those are two. Your Majesty thinks that the Cabinet ought not to be consulted on a question of honours, because the Sovereign is the fountain of honour; and that if Lord Lansdowne does not receive an honour on his retirement this will be regarded as an expression of party hatred conceived by the Prime Minister.

On the second point, Mr. Gladstone strongly holds the opinion

<sup>1</sup> Lords Rosebery and Ripon.

which he believes to be that of Your Majesty. He thinks that any Minister, who could allow party feeling to enter into such a case as that of Lord Lansdowne, would, if it were done unconsciously, fall into a gross error in judgment: if consciously, he would commit a most grave offence.

With regard to the first point, Mr. Gladstone does not know whether he is in possession of Your Majesty's full view. At the time when Your Majesty appealed to Lord Kimberley,<sup>1</sup> he had not lost a single day in prosecuting the case, so far as circumstances allowed. This was due to Lord Lansdowne, and due still more to the expressed wish of Your Majesty for dispatch.

Mr. Gladstone did not consult the Cabinet on this occasion, or he would have reported it to Your Majesty, together with the result. But he ascertained the opinions of individual Ministers sufficiently to show him the general impression. He intimated to Your Majesty that this impression was one related to reasons. He has not troubled Your Majesty with those reasons, lest by doing so he should appear to lay charges of error against the Governor-General. Should Your Majesty command it, he will be in duty bound to make the statement. The service done in the case of the Ameer was undoubtedly excellent service.

On the concern of the Cabinet in these matters, Mr. Gladstone will only say a few words. In the Cabinet of Sir Robert Peel, the conduct of Lord Ellenborough as Viceroy was brought before the Ministers. In the second Cabinet of Lord Palmerston (1859-1865) the appointment of a particular person to be Viceroy was, and unless his memory greatly deceives him was more than once, brought before that Cabinet, and there decided. Mr. Gladstone has never known a case where the Cabinet have interfered in a question of honour purely titular, or honour connected with an office lying beyond the established circle of political administration. But, in the public mind, and in ordinary practice, the Cabinet is viewed as the seat of ultimate responsibility; and, in view of the precedents which he has quoted, Mr. Gladstone owns himself unable to exclude from all concern in the honours bestowed upon a Viceroy those who have been and may be consulted upon his appointment, and who are absolutely responsible for his administrative acts. It is true indeed, as Your Majesty observes, that the Sovereign is the fountain of honour; but it is

<sup>1</sup> Lord President of the Council.

also true that the Sovereign is the fountain of law. That Mr. Gladstone did not consult the Cabinet (to which every Minister is as a rule entitled to appeal in matters concerning him) was due in part to the absence of Lord Kimberley, but also to a sentiment of deference to Your Majesty. . . .

*Same Day.*

Mr. Gladstone submits his humble duty, and being now in possession of information on one or two points which had not been cleared when he addressed Your Majesty this forenoon, he thinks Your Majesty would wish to be at once placed in possession of any detailed facts bearing on the question of honours for the Viceroy of India.

Your Majesty is aware that the (Ordinary) Grand Cross of the Bath has been accepted by Cabinet Ministers, not only of high rank, but of such exceptional distinction as Sir James Graham.<sup>1</sup> Without the smallest adverse feeling to Lord Lansdowne, he is not able to rate him as high as Sir James Graham.

With respect to the (Ordinary) Grand Cross in connection with the office of Governor-General, Mr. Gladstone finds that it was given, during the tenure of that office, to Lord Auckland, whose subsequent career was marked by disaster not universally ascribed to himself; and to Lord Hardinge, whose course as Viceroy was distinguished by uniform soundness of judgment, and was marked by services which may almost be described as illustrious. Many Viceroys have had the Grand Cross, but not in special connection with the office.

Some of the facts now mentioned may perhaps appear to Your Majesty relevant to the present question. He adds one of minor importance, because he is in direct possession of the facts, which concerned himself. The Grand Cross (Ordinary) was offered to him after more than a quarter of a century of public life, and after he had thrice served Your Majesty in Cabinet as President of the Board of Trade, as Secretary of State, and as Chancellor of the Exchequer. To accept it did not lie within his views; but he regarded the offer as an act of grace and favour from Your Majesty.

The proposal of the Extraordinary Grand Cross was intended,

<sup>1</sup> First Lord of the Admiralty, 1830-4; Home Secretary, 1843-6; First Lord of the Admiralty, 1852-5.

and may, Mr. Gladstone supposes, be regarded as some, though a slight, enhancement of the honour.

1454 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

OSBORNE. Jan. 23. 1894.

The Queen has given Mr. Gladstone's proposal for conferring Baronetcies on Mr. Watts & Mr. B. Jones her full consideration & is ready to sanction it—having herself seen photographs of the latter's works wh<sup>ch</sup> show a g<sup>t</sup> power of composition & correct drawing, tho' his colouring, like Watts's, is not considered good.

1455 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) II, 359.)

OSBORNE. Feb. 10. 1894.

The Queen has app<sup>d</sup> Canon Basil Wilberforce's appointment but wishes to add a *condition* to it, viz: that he sh<sup>d</sup> not when preaching at Westminster use the vy strong total abstinence language wh<sup>ch</sup> he has carried to such an extreme bitterness.

Total abstinence is an impossibility & tho' it may be necessary in individual cases it will not do to insist on it as a general practice—and the Queen relies on Mr. Gladstone's speaking strongly to him in this sense.

1456 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) II, 360.)

Feb. 11. 1894.

Mr. Gladstone . . . acknowledges Your Majesty's gracious letter respecting Mr. Basil Wilberforce.

Although he hopes that Mr. Wilberforce would through his own good sense forbear from using the opportunities given by the Abbey pulpit for inculcating the doctrine of total abstinence, Mr. Gladstone, humbly concurring in Your Majesty's general view, is prepared to communicate with him for the purpose Your Majesty desires, in fulfilment of the condition which he understands Your Majesty to desire and to annex to the assent graciously given.

In furtherance of this view, and in order that the matter, which is of some delicacy, may be handled in the best way, Mr. Gladstone thinks he might do well to confer if Your Majesty approves with the Dean of Westminster.

1457 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

OSBORNE. February 14. 1894.

The Queen commands me to let you know that she will be glad if you will communicate with the Dean of Westminster on the subject of checking Mr. Wilberforce in his desire (if he manifests any) of preaching teetotal sermons in Westminster Abbey.

1458 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

OSBORNE. February 14. 1894.

The Queen hopes you will let Lord Lansdowne know that he will have the offer of the first vacant Garter.

1459 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to General Ponsonby*

LONDON. 14th Feb. 1894.

. . . I have returned, thank God, in excellent health, but am rather concerned to find upon experiment that my sight has gone one stage backward since I started for Biarritz in the middle of January.

1460 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. February 24. 1894.

I repeated to The Queen the substance of my conversation with you. Her Majesty asked what was the message you desired to give her. I of course said I knew nothing but The Queen replied that she could not bind herself to preserve secrecy on a matter of which she knew nothing and asked for some hint. . . .

1461 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to General Ponsonby*(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) II, 363.)

Private.

10, DOWNING STREET. 25 Feb. 1894.

You will remember my saying yesterday that my sole object was Her Majesty's convenience; that in this view there was an intimation which I wished to make to her; but I was under an obligation of honour requiring that I should not do this unless assured that it would not at the moment go beyond the Queen herself—with some more which I need not repeat.

The Queen appears to be under the impression that this intimation would invite her to decide something in the dark. On the

contrary, it would not ask or seek or need a single word, not even an acknowledgment. It would be simply depositing, so to speak, something with the Queen to which she would give as much or as little attention as she thought proper. If and when it became in any way practical, of course I should never dream of asking that it should be confined to the Queen herself. As the Queen has Parliament in her mind, I may say that it is not the subject of my intimation. I think I have now said all that I can say with the object, and at the same time under the very positive obligation which I described to you. Even in the act of conversing with you, you may remember that I expressed my reliance on your kindness as to the full maintenance of this obligation.

Of course the word 'Private' is not as against the Queen.

*1462 (Copy) Mr. Gladstone to General Ponsonby*

Feb. 25. 1894.

. . . The very last thing I should pray for or desire is discussion on my notice or intimation. I should deem it wholly premature. For this reason I contemplated a letter and one not requiring acknowledgment.

If Her Majesty on the other hand enjoins a personal statement which seemingly entails a day's delay of course I shall cheerfully obey.

If I am to write, perhaps you will kindly let me know.

1463

*General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

BUCKINGHAM PALACE. February 26. 1894.

I could not get a very distinct message from The Queen to you last night and indeed even now I must explain my words.

The Queen could not enter into a secret discussion with you which might lead to misunderstandings and before speaking to you on what you may say to her she would wish to consult other friends.

I pointed out that in your letter yesterday you said you did not expect her to express an opinion on what you intended to communicate and that you would not ask for an acknowledgment.

And I thought therefore that perhaps a brief personal interview might be most convenient.

The Queen said that if she was only to listen to your communication this might do.

But I should make it quite clear that she should not be expected to discuss the matter.

She could then simply listen to you upon this subject when she sees you on Wednesday afternoon.

**1464 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria***

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) II, 304.)

10, DOWNING STREET. Feb. 27. 1894.

Mr. Gladstone presents his humble duty to Your Majesty, and believes himself now authorised to convey to Your Majesty the preliminary intimation which he has thought it would be for the convenience of Your Majesty to receive.

It is to the effect that, when the business of the present Session, and any matter immediately connected therewith, shall have been disposed of, he believes it will be his duty to tender to Your Majesty, on physical grounds, his resignation of office.

As his present object is simply to inform Your Majesty, without asking or desiring even a formal acknowledgment of this letter, he reserves all explanation of particulars until the day, perhaps a very early one, when he humbly proposes to carry his intention into effect.

**1465 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria***

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (4) II, 366-7.)

10, DOWNING STREET. 1st March. 1894.

Mr. Gladstone reports . . . that the Cabinet met today to consider in the first place the amendments made yesterday by the Lords in the Local Government Bill, which have been more grave in their character than Mr. Gladstone anticipated when he had the honour yesterday of conversing with Your Majesty. --

The Cabinet disapprove strongly of those amendments, but they are so unwilling to risk the loss of an important measure that they propose to accept them under a strong protest against their character, which they are obliged to consider in connection with the other disagreements that have unfortunately prevailed.

The Cabinet then determined on the draft of the short speech before the Prorogation, which Mr. Gladstone has the honour to submit for Your Majesty's gracious consideration.



Looking forward to the likelihood that this might be the last occasion, on which Mr. Gladstone and his Colleagues might meet in the Cabinet, Lord Kimberley<sup>1</sup> and Sir Wm. Harcourt,<sup>2</sup> on their own part and on that of the Ministers generally, used words undeservedly kind, of acknowledgment and farewell. . . .

**1466 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria***

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) II, 371-2, and *Life of Gladstone*, III, 514-15)

DOWNING STREET. 3rd March. 1894.

Mr. Gladstone presents his most humble duty to Your Majesty. The close of the Session and the approach of a new one have offered Mr. Gladstone a suitable opportunity for considering the condition of his sight and hearing, both of them impaired in relation to his official obligations. As they now place serious and also growing obstacles in the way of the efficient discharge of those obligations, the result has been that he has found it his duty humbly to tender to Your Majesty his resignation of the high offices which Your Majesty has been pleased to intrust to him.

His desire to make this surrender is accompanied with a grateful sense of the condescending kindnesses which Your Majesty has graciously shown him on so many occasions during the various periods for which he has had the honour to serve Your Majesty.

Mr. Gladstone will not needlessly burden Your Majesty with a recital of particulars. He may however say that although at 84 years of age he is sensible of a diminished capacity for prolonged labour, this is not of itself such as would justify his praying to be relieved from the restraints and exigencies of official life. But his deafness has become in Parliament and even in the Cabinet a serious inconvenience, of which he must reckon on more progressive increase.

More grave than this, and more rapid in its growth, is the obstruction of vision which arises from cataract in both his eyes. It has cut him off in substance from the newspapers and from all except the best types in the best lights: while even as to these he cannot master them with that ordinary facility and dispatch which he deems absolutely required for the due dispatch of his public duties.

<sup>1</sup> Lord President of the Council.

<sup>2</sup> Chancellor of the Exchequer.

In other respects than reading the operation of the complaint is not as yet so serious but this one he deems to be vital.

Accordingly he brings together these two facts, the condition of his sight and hearing, and the break in the course of public affairs brought about in the ordinary way by the close of the Session. He has therefore felt that this is the fitting opportunity for the resignation which by this letter he humbly prays Your Majesty to accept.

1467 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) II, 372-3 and *Life of Gladstone*, III, 515.)

WINDSOR CASTLE. *March 3. 1894.*

Though the Queen has already accepted Mr. Gladstone's resignation & has taken leave of him, she does not like to leave his letter tendering his resignation unanswered. She therefore writes these few lines to say that she thinks, that after so many years of arduous labour & responsibility he is right in wishing to be relieved at his age of these arduous duties. And she trusts he will be able to enjoy peace & quiet with his excellent & devoted wife in health & happiness & that his eyesight may improve.

The Queen would gladly have conferred a Peersage on Mr. Gladstone but she knows he wd not accept it.

1468 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. *March 3. 1894.*

I presume The Queen will have told you that Her Majesty has summoned Lord Rosebery as your successor and that he has accepted.

1469 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) II, 376.)

DOWNING STREET. *4th March. 1894.*

Mr. Gladstone offers to Your Majesty his humble duty, and has the honour to receive Your Majesty's gracious letter. In passing, he must especially thank Your Majesty for the words most acceptable to him of all such words which relate to his wife.

He loses no time in forwarding his humble recommendation of honours, on which Your Majesty has permitted him to offer

explanations by word of mouth which he hopes may save Your Majesty some trouble.

1470 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to General Ponsonby*

LONDON. *March 4. 1894.*

I really was ashamed last night at your kindness in writing to me when you are under such pressure, locomotive and other, and when it is I who have been the means of bringing it upon you.

Pray take no more trouble, and let me take my chance as one of the public. Interesting as all intelligence is under the circumstances, it is probably better that for the time at any rate, I should remain an extraneous person.

1471 *General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

WINDSOR CASTLE. *March 4. 1894.*

. . . I cannot help feeling that to many of us yours was a melancholy visit and I confess I was very sorry to take a sort of official leave of you. . . .

I hope Mrs. Gladstone is not the worse for her visit. .

1472 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to General Ponsonby*

(Printed in *Life of Gladstone*, III, 516.)

LONDON. *5th March. 1894.*

The first entrance of a man to Windsor Castle in a responsible character is a great event in his life : and his last departure from it is not less moving.

But in and during the process which led up to this termination on Saturday, my action has been in the strictest sense sole, and it has required me in circumstances partly known to harden my heart into a flint.

However, it is not even now so hard but that I can feel what you have most kindly written : nor do I fail to observe with pleasure that you do not speak absolutely in the singular. If there were feelings that made the occasion sad, such feelings do not die with the occasion.

But this letter must not be wholly one of egotism. I have known, and have liked and have admired all the men who have served the Queen in your delicate, and responsible office : and have liked most, probably because I knew him most, the last of

them, that most truehearted man,<sup>1</sup> General Grey. But forgive me for saying you are "to the manner born" and such a combination of tact and temper with loyalty, intelligence and truth I cannot expect to see again. Pray remember these are words which can only pass from an old one to one much younger though trained in long experience.

1473

*General Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone*

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, March 5, 1894.

I cannot say how delighted I was at your very kind letter to me which deeply touched me as coming from you especially at this moment. I am indeed most truly sorry that I shall no longer have you to rely on in all my difficulties. . . .



*RETIREMENT, 1864-8.*



1474 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

[Telegram] FIRENZE, VILLA FABBRICOTTI. March 30. 1894.

Hope your friends will oppose attempt to reduce Duke Coburg allowance.

1475 (Copy) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

BRIGHTON. March 30. 1894.

Mr. Gladstone . . . has the honour to acknowledge Your Majesty's telegram from Florence respecting the Duke of Coburg which he has this day received.

Before quitting Downing Street he particularly requested that notice might be given to him of any adverse movement. He has received no such notice, and Your Majesty's telegram has no definite indication on the subject. But he will renew the request he has made, in order that the ground may be secure so far as his personal action is secured. As regards influence upon others he humbly thinks his best method of using it will be by public acts. And at present he regrets to be a little uncertain to what point he can carry them as he is still labouring under the remains of a recent bronchial attack. He will however endeavour under all circumstances to act for the best. He respectfully hopes that Your Majesty enjoys the visit to Florence and is favoured by the weather.

1476 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

VILLA FABBRICOTTI. FLORENCE. April 6. 1894.

The Queen thanks Mr. Gladstone for his kind letter & promise of assistance in case of need. She mistook the day of Mr. Labouchere's renewed attack on the Duke of Coburg's annuity wh<sup>ch</sup> she finds is only to be towards the end of this month.

We have not had a drop of rain since we came, but for 10 or 12 days the weather was vy bright—the wind was vy cold. But for the last week & more it has been warm & quite summer all this week & vy hot tho' with a beautiful air. The Queen has



again been most warmly & kindly rec<sup>d</sup> : in this beautiful place. She had the pleasure of seeing Sir James Lacaita<sup>1</sup> & having some interesting conversations with him. He seems in v<sup>y</sup> delicate health.

The Queen hopes Mrs. Gladstone is better & that Mr. Gladstone has quite recovered.

1477 (*Copy*) *Mr. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

BRIGHTON. April 13. 1894.

Mr. Gladstone . . . does not hear that the assault announced for the 20th inst. is likely to be formidable but he hopes to be in his place for the purpose of voting and of speaking in case it should appear advisable.

His wife is materially better, and they propose to come to Dollis Hill near London tomorrow but neither he nor she are yet quite able to dispense with medical attendance. . . .

1478 *Queen Victoria to Mr. Gladstone*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) III, 91.)

[*Telegram*]

BALMORAL. 11th Oct. 1896.

Your telegram has quite stunned me, and I cannot sufficiently express my sorrow at this terrible loss.<sup>2</sup> I was exceedingly fond of the dear Archbishop, and had the greatest regard for him. Fear this sad event happening in your house must be a great shock to you and Mrs. Gladstone.

1479 (*Copy*) *Mrs. Gladstone to Queen Victoria*

(Printed in *Letters of Queen Victoria*, (3) III, 93.)

HAWARDEN CASTLE, CHESTER. 13th October. 1896.

My husband begs me to write after Your Majesty's tender thought of us, which we felt came not so much from a loved Queen, but from one who had suffered and did suffer with and for us all. In the midst of the tragedy, there was a great *sense of fitness* in his dying here, close to my husband ; and dear Mrs. Benson is able to feel this, with many other great and ennobling thoughts. And, agony as it has been and is, we must not lose sight of this, that God has dealt so lovingly with us. One of our

<sup>1</sup> Italian patriot and friend of Cavour and Gladstone.

<sup>2</sup> Archbishop Benson died suddenly at Hawarden, October 11, 1896.

last talks, on Saturday evening, the dear Archbishop was dwelling with tenderness and admiration on his last interview with Your Majesty. He walked up to Church with Mary quite gently, well and happy, and knelt down in my husband's place near me. This is a blessed memory for me, may it help us onward and upward!

Mrs. Benson has just started for London, calm and patient, full of faith and courage. It was indeed a lesson to be with her.

What we feel so very especially is that Your Majesty, stunned with grief and the sense of personal loss, should have thought of us.

1480     *Sir Fleetwood Edwards*<sup>1</sup> to *Mr. Gladstone*

OSBORNE. 22 July. 1897.

I am desired by The Queen to send for the acceptance of Mrs. Gladstone and yourself two Jubilee medals to be worn in commemoration of the 60th anniversary of Her Majesty's reign.

They have been struck to commemorate the Jubilee of 1887 with the addition of a clasp for 1897.

<sup>1</sup> Keeper of the Privy Purse.



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